STANDING IN THE GAP: MOTIVATING MEMBERS OF A FAITH BASED ORGANIZATION TO BECOME MENTORS FOR AGED-OUT FOSTER CARE YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

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The context for this project is the Charles F. Golden Memorial United Methodist Church located in Douglasville, Georgia----a suburb of Atlanta. The problem within this context is that there is a lack of motivation for the members to become mentors to the aged out foster care youth. This qualitative study will prove that by equipping, empowering, educating and encouraging this Faith Based Organization while exploring a theological approach and analyzing the biblical mandate to care for orphans, will be the compelling catalyst needed to assume pivotal care in guiding the emancipated youth through the complexities of young adult life.

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DEDICATION

To the blessed memory of my late grandmother, uncle, and cousin who laid a foundation by loving me unconditionally which afforded me the innate ability to believe in myself at an early age: Mrs. Madie Lee Dennis (my maternal grandmother), Mr. Mike Dennis (my maternal uncle) and Mr. Michael Woods (my maternal cousin). Can't wait to see you all again.

To my daddy, the late Mr. George "Duke" William Guilford, Jr., who made my life and work possible because he constantly and consistently demonstrated the epitome of love from a father to a daughter. I wished that every daughter could experience the empowerment of a daddy's love. There is not a day that goes by that I do not feel your presence nor realize some of the things that I accomplish are because of what you and mommy instilled in me. It is my prayer that I make you as proud of me as you made me as proud to call you Daddy. Always basking in your light…forever a Daddy's girl.

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We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.

— Sir Winston Churchil

INTRODUCTION

Over 20,000 youth aging out of foster care each year are discharged from care with no social support or assistance, resulting in lack of basic education, high rates of unemployment, homelessness, and dependence on public assistance programs. When the child welfare system removes children from their homes, the system becomes responsible for providing them with housing, quality education, and other services to ensure their wellbeing. As these children age, the system is also responsible for preparing them for adulthood and independence. Increasingly, research suggests that having a permanent supportive relationship with, and feeling connected to an adult matters in the long and short-term wellbeing of youth and young adults.[1]

How do we form family-like connections and supports for young people aging out of care when we have failed to do so while these same young people were in care? How do we help young people to develop relational skills and interpersonal connections as a component of programs with the specific goal of developing their independent living skills? What relational networks do these young adults have, and how might these networks provide support, or not, across the life course? What are the unique roles of adults, both kin and non-kin, during these transitional years? Over the past decade, youth mentoring programs in which volunteer middle class citizens offer social disadvantages

[1] M. R. Beam, C. Chen, and E. Greenberger, "The Nature Of Adolescents' Relationships With 'Very Important' Nonparental Adults," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 30, no. 2 (April 2002): 305–325.

children and adolescents have gained popularity. The desire to help appears to be an essential aspect of human nature. One particular type of helping behavior is mentoring. Every year, millions of people engage in mentoring, whether it is providing a health care partner in free clinics, companionship in hospices, or tutoring for the illiterate. Numerous organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, the American Red Cross, and the Big Brothers Big Sisters Foundation have come to rely heavily on volunteer service. According to a survey done by the Independent Sector, 61.8 million Americans volunteered for a total of 8 billion hours in 2008. Of the 61.8 million volunteers, 12.9 million were employed by nonprofit organizations, accounting for nearly 10% of America's workforce and 5% of its GDP. When calculated in dollar terms, volunteer service was estimated to be worth more than 160 billion dollars.[2]

Most research on motivation has focused on work-related motivation as it is deemed to have a greater impact on the economy and thus, regarded as more important.[3] Although mentoring has become a popular strategy to help youth stay on track, and numerous studies have reported better outcomes resulting from positive mentoring experiences,[4] researchers found that faith based organizations is significant and holds a special place in the lives of many Americans and serve as a protective factor against risky

[2] Independent Sector, "Giving and Volunteering in the United States 2010: Executive Summary," Washington, D.C.

[3] Jonathan A. Johnson, "Getting and Staying Involved: What Motivates Volunteers in a Non-Profit Organization" (PhD diss., Capella University, 2007), 101, accessed February 11, 2016, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

[4] David Dubois and Michael Karcher, "Youth Mentoring: Theory, Research, Practice," in *Handbook of Youth Mentoring,* ed. David DuBois and Michael Karcher (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2013), 1-13.

behavior.[5] In addition, faith-based congregations possess a wealth of resources that include (a) trained health professionals, (b) physical space for programs, and (c) a network of caring volunteers. By using these resources, this type of venue possesses independence from constraints from outside interest groups making demands to perform, conform, or adhere to their requirements.[6] With limited restrictions, many programs ranging from counseling, drug-free education, parenting workshops, mentoring, academic instruction, and motivational sermons can be administered without strict guidelines from interest groups; thereby, allowing programs that are considered protective factors to be preached.[7]

A biblical theology of mentoring is examined and the theory of motivation behind mentoring is explored. The purpose of this study is to show that by equipping, empowering, educating and encouraging a Faith Based Organization to play a vital role while exploring the biblical mandate to care for the orphans will motivate a faith based organization to Stand in the Gap for the aged out foster care youth.

The research is comprised of six chapters. The first chapter discusses the ministry focus in detail with an in-depth analysis of the context both internally and externally. Also, the chapter provides the reader with the soul of the writer and a targeted view of the depth from which the inter-textual framework was manifested. Chapter two highlights the biblical grounding that justifies why every Christian should be concerned about the fatherless children and the provisional gap that can be fulfilled through mentoring of the

[5] John Wallace, *Faith Matters: Race/Ethnicity, Religion and Substance*, Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004, accessed April 20, 2016, http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-faithmattersRaceReligionUse-2004.pdf.

[6] Wallace, *Faith Matters*, 2.

[7] Johnson, "Getting and Staying," 79.

aged out foster care youth. Chapter three provides the historical account of the government provisions for the targeted subject and its failed attempt as a “parent” which further substantiate the fact that faith based organizations make better parents. Chapter four examines and challenges the ideology of being about God’s business and challenges the unrecognized teething troubles that the emancipated youth faces. Chapter five recognize that in order to implement a solution to the problem, the faith based community must recognize that there is a problem (educate), get an understanding of the biblical decree (mandate) and then become inspired by the cause (motivate). Lastly, chapter six outlines the methodology and design of the project to include an explanation of activities that took place in relation to the study.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Adorned with the mantle of entrepreneurship (as my father), I cannot say that I have always embodied helping others, even after getting involved with the church nor after accepting my call into ministry. However, it was not until after giving birth to my son and my father's death (six months apart) that I developed a nurturing approach and a desire to look beyond what was presented to get a better understanding of a deeper valuation. It was a desire that pulled at my heartstring after realizing who I was as a result of what had been instilled in me as a young girl to not put judgment before dialogue and understanding.

Yes, most go into business to make money and after reflecting on my endeavors, it became apparent that most of my businesses (while netting an income) were also helping others in a multitude of ways. In the neighborhood that I grew up in, there was and still is within our community an orphanage—as we termed them then. After a few fights and taunts as an elementary school girl, I became pals with some of the kids that were my age. So much so that after getting permission from my parents, I would find myself playing with my friends after school. From elementary school to high school, I forged a bond with many of them and I now realize that what my family and I represented for them was their "Safety Net." I find it very profound that the relationship that was forged in my youth has shaped me into what I have become—an advocate for

those that are disenfranchised. Consequently, after graduating from high school, our paths never crossed again.

With much prayer and supplication, I sought directions for the next phase of my life; I was led to look into establishing a group home. I did my due diligence in educating myself of what running a group home actually entailed and while surfing the internet, I happened across information on a symposium discussing the relevant facts of a group home. In short, my path was not to ascertain a group home but in fact, to establish an Independent Living Services for the aged-out foster care youth between the age of eighteen and twenty-three. Unbeknownst to me, once a foster care youth turn eighteen (and before certain laws established) they were shown the door with no direction or instructions and given only what they had accumulated during their time in foster care. Undoubtedly, this is what happened to my friends that I had known since elementary school, they were put out on the streets with no one to guide them and no one to serve as a safety net. Inadvertently, I reflect back on my own life and realize that if I had not had the guidance of my parents and my sister, I too would have been left drifting in the sea with no guidance and no one to throw me a—safety net. Alarmingly, statistics show that those without an adult connection become homeless, become prostitutes and or become addicted to drugs.

As a young adult, I began to manifest my life by the word of God while attempting to parallel Jesus' life and resurrection embodying liberation, transformation, and justice for the poor, oppressed, marginalized, and disenfranchised within the context of society. Harvesting the quintessence of Jesus and as an entrepreneurial endeavor, I established and created a 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization qualified under the 509(a)(1)

statute. The non-profit organization, Refuge Community Development Corporation, operates an Independent Living Program (ILP) aptly named, Second Chapter with the tag line—where one chapter ends and the next chapter begins.

The Independent Living Program recognizes that the human life cycle goes through stages. The developmental stage comprises infancy to adolescence…thus termed the "First Chapter" of life. The maturation stage comprises young adult through late adulthood, which is considered the "Second Chapter" of life. Second Chapter recognizes that life is full of changes and sometimes, the changes occur when one chapter is ending and another chapter is beginning which can cause frustration and anxiety. Second Chapter provides and pays for a fully furnished apartment, conveys an idealistic approach to fostering independence, instruct on financial management, menu planning, grocery shopping, house management, practical life training and other skill building activities to assist in propelling the aged-out foster care youth into becoming self-sufficient.

At Second Chapter, we recognize that life is full of changes and sometimes, the changes occur when one chapter is ending and another chapter is beginning. Most eighteen year olds have a network of support to guide them into adulthood. However, most young adults who have aged out of the foster care system and find themselves without family, few emotional connections, no financial assistance, and prospects for self-sufficiency are dim at best. Foster youth lack the experience and knowledge to live on their own and are at high risk of dropping out of school, becoming homeless, being unemployed, becoming a parent early, and participating in criminal activity. In foster care, youth will at times have a family friend or relative that is still involved in their life as they transition out of care. Most of their counterparts are blessed because they have

their parents and a support system. They may possibly have one relative or friend that can be their source of help for food, advice, transportation, or whatever they may need; but what if they do not have that support system? How can we help these youth?

Some studies have focused on the specific effects of religiosity for high-risk adolescents. In these studies, religion is the mediator that buffers the negative effects of poverty, or is a source of resiliency for teens in poverty or those who are exposed to poor neighborhoods and violence. Pamela Joshi, Erin Hardy and Stephanie Hawkins reviewed the literature around the role of religiosity for low-income youth. The authors found: "that religiosity is a significant moderating factor between risk factors and negative life events."[1] Having a worldview (like a religion) provides an individual a "buffer" that "shields the individual from existential anxiety and enables the individual to achieve self-esteem and life satisfaction through the knowledge that one is a valuable member of a meaningful universe."[2]

Faith Based Organizations

The term "faith based" has become widely used, but not embraced as the multi-faceted vehicle for which it stands. E. L. Dionne notes that it sounds a bit antiseptic[3] while William Safire denotes that it is a euphemism adopted as a convenience by politicians, and urges what he sees as the more honest and straightforward term

[1] Office of Health Policy, ASPE, *Role of Religiosity in the Lives of the Low-Income Population: A Comprehensive Review of the Evidence*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Planning and Evaluation, 2008), 8.

[2] Charles H. Hackney and Glenn S. Sanders, "Religiosity and Mental Health: A Meta–Analysis of Recent Studies," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 42, no. 1 (2003): 51.

[3] E. J. Dionne, Jr., "Take It on Faith," *Washington Post*, June 20, 2009, accessed April 21, 2016, http://www.thewashingtonpost.com/magazine-20090620.

"religion-based" or, more simply, "religious."[4] The term "faith-based" has at least two important advantages. First, it is congregational based and not "Church-based" because many religions and denominations do not refer to their place of worship as a "church." To say church base would omit synagogues, mosques, meetinghouses, and other places of worship. However, to say "congregation-based" omits the many non-congregational organizations that engages activities that benefit the public (i.e., YMCA, Big Brother Big Sister, etc.).

Secondly, it gives play to the term "…separation of church and state." Safire explains, that the American political tradition shies away from religion in politics, but not away from religious values in public life.[5] In other words, the political power machines, in an effort to minimalize the Christian values on which this country was founded, has manipulated the value system to the point that it recognize the importance of the church within society but, does not want to appear to be in partnership with her. Subsequently, by substituting of the word faith (trust in the truths) for religion (the organized set of beliefs), helps to put at ease the pundits.

In recent years, policymakers have begun looking to churches, synagogues, mosques, and other faith-based organizations to play a greater role in strengthening communities because they realized that there is a greater connection to faith-based organizations and community than there are government and communities. More than half of all congregations and many other faith-based organizations provide some form of human services.

[4] William Safire, "Faith Based: Why Does Religious Suddenly Need a Synonym," *The New York Times,* June 27, 2010, accessed April 1, 2016, http://nytimes.com/Magazine.

[5] Safire, "Faith Based."

A small number of high-quality quantitative analyses have identified five factors that appear to influence a congregation's likelihood of participating in some type of service activity.[6]

- *Size* **–** Larger Congregations have more contributors, more funding, more paid staff and a larger pool of volunteers to support activities.
- *Race* **–** Predominantly African American congregations are significantly more likely than white congregation to provide services.
- *Income* **–** Presence of enough income and not the presence of low-income members who advocate for a particular activity.
- *Theological and political orientation* **–** Liberal are more likely than others to engage in social services.
- *Community Need* – More than likely to provide services if its house of worship is located in a neighborhood where services are needed.
- *Leadership* **–** The extent to which a congregation engages in service activities is heavily influenced by the tendency of its leadership.[7]

Faith-Based Organizations (FBO) are engaged in a wide variety of activities beyond worship, most of which provide services and immediate benefits to needy individuals and families. More than half of all congregations participate. The approach they take most frequently is to support with donations and volunteer labor service delivery conducted by other types of organizations. The likelihood that they will become involved in this way appears to depend on several factors, including whether the congregation's house of worship is in a poor neighborhood; whether the congregation has or can raise adequate resources, which depends importantly on its size (especially whether it is very

[6] Mark Chaves and William Tsitos, "Congregations and Social Services: What They Do, How They Do It, and With Whom" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action, December 2001), accessed January 12, 2016, http://nvs.sagepub.com/content/30/4/660.

[7] Chaves and Tsitos, "Congregations and Social Services," accessed January 12, 2016, http://nvs.sagepub.com/content/30/4/660.

large), and possibly on congregant income; its racial composition; its theological and political orientation; and pastoral leadership.

To engage with maximum effect, a church will generally need to work through a separately incorporated nonprofit entity, and fostering such an entity makes special demands on congregations. Despite their limited numbers, however, those congregations could make significant contributions to community development. Larger FBO, particularly those affiliated with major denominations, have some experience in housing and community economic development, both directly and through their social investments. Faith Based Organizations are the easiest community development participants to identify.

It is very apparent that FBO were created to be the pulse of America. The moral barometer on which the weight that becomes too hard to bear—weighs heavily on the squared shoulders of the nonprofit community. FBO make it possible to become "heavily" involved in any social justice issues that may plaque this nation. If you take the historical, add it to the political, and convey it via the word of God, it becomes the right anecdote to propel any human being into taking care of those who are marginalized and disenfranchised. It is time for the FBO to rally for those that cannot self-rally; no longer sitting; it is time to stand.

Context

The early church modeled social concerns. James commands believers not to show favoritism because God has not "chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world

to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him."[8] Quoting Jesus and the Old Testament, James says that to keep the royal law is to "love your neighbor as yourself." The church is mandated to live out the message of Jesus by caring for and providing opportunities for those aged-out of foster care so that they may be equal citizens in society. Mentoring is a partnership that can echo the message of Jesus that will allow two individuals to focus on the discovery of one's life direction and base the formation from a holistic and action based approach that promotes the process of understanding overall life purpose.

Golden United Methodist Church is located within the boundaries of Douglasville, Georgia. The church dates back to the late 1800's when there were two churches, Warren Chapel Methodist Church and Mt. Carmel Methodist Church was merged to form the United Methodist Church in 1965 and later renamed Charles F. Golden United Methodist Church (CFGUMC) in 1968 in honor of the former bishop of the Black Georgia Conference of the Methodist Church. In 2001, CFGUMC officially became Charles F. Golden Memorial United Methodist Church (CFGMUMC) after the death of Bishop Charles F. Golden.

Historically and assumingly because of its denominational ties, Golden has never been involved with any political nor social issues. Until perhaps fifteen years ago, Golden held true to the practices and rituals of the United Methodist Church. The current pastor, Dr. Gregory Williams, has pastored Golden since 2008, bringing with him a wealth of ideas and a burning desire to offer ministry that touches the entire person in a spiritual and physical way. Dr. William's vision has propelled the congregation into the new

[8] Biblical citations within this document are from the New King James Version unless stated otherwise, James 2:5.

millennium and church growth is indicative of his leadership. The continued growth of CFGMUMC, rests heavily on meeting the needs of the entire Christian family which should include the mandate to live out the message of Jesus by caring for the poor, caring for the homeless, and advocating for democracy and social justice. One of the challenges faced by CFGMUMC in living out this Christian mandate to care for the poor and advocate for social equality, is the lack of knowledge about the social injustices that the aged-out foster care youth are subjected to.

The goals of this project were 1) to educate the congregation on the disparities faced by aged-out youth; 2) to teach biblically sound doctrine on providing for the fatherless; 3) to teach biblically on mentoring; 4) to encourage and empower the congregation to mentor the aged-out foster care youth; and 5) emphasize that these youth are reaching out and there's no one answering.

It is necessary to highlight these points and then reiterate that aged out foster care youth need help making decisions and quite often, there is no one to assist them. They need a model to demonstrate to them what strength and character looks like because there is no one that depicts those characters in their lives. Also, they need someone to assist in mapping out their future because they have no one that can serve as a guide through life. These young people need mentors to help turn life's problems into manageable solutions. Congregants at CFGMUMC offer a loving environment and spiritual vitality to have discussions about this disparaged segment of society and how each willing individual can invest his or her gifts and time. This presented concepts and techniques for a practical application of ministry where people are provided critical and important information concerning the challenges aged-out youth face, the implications these challenges have on

their civil rights, the cultural underpinnings these disparities have on the black community, and specific ways the congregation can effectuate long-term social change for this population.

To forge the passion of enhancing the lives of youth and the ministry, blessings was received from pastor, Dr. Gregory Williams, to implement a mentoring program at The Golden Memorial United Methodist Church. However, after doing some preliminary research, creating a focus group and after creating and detailing a mentoring program, I soon realized that there was more work that needed to be done before implementing a mentoring ministry...there needed to be a process of motivation that would enable the context to attain the ability to stand in the gap for the aged out foster care youth. In assimilating my contextual analysis, it is quite apparent Dr. Williams has a heart for God's people regardless of their status. However, it appears that there are those within the context that have found comfort in their contentment and that an attempt to assist, support, and contribute to those that are in need, is not priority. Dr. William's heart is conveyed consistently and I believe that once a three million dollar structure is erected for a Family Life Center, we will begin to see his heart's desire manifested more. I hesitate to refer to what's missing as a stable outreach ministry because outreach, in my opinion, starts from within. Can outreach be "inreach" (Is there such a thing)? To help others is essentially helping ones self and to deny others, one deny oneself.

Faith Based Organizations are often labor-intensive rather than capital-intensive because of the fields where they operate. The organizations include a variety of people such as volunteers and paid staff, however, in the non-profit sector volunteering is the most common form of work. If one narrows it down, there are approximately 180,000

organizations that engage volunteers in this country.[9] There are certain types of people that are attracted to engage in non-profit organization, and according to Mathieu Narcy[10] these organizations attract people who have a lower interest for monetary rewards and instead they "donate labor." These people are called volunteers and Anheier defines a volunteer as an individual that give of their time to help others without getting any monetary payment.[11]

Albeit that the context is a faith-based organization and the success of the mentoring program will rely heavily on volunteers, it is imperative that faith based, volunteerism and motivation be defined. Specifically as it is in reference to this project and context, the day-to-day volunteer will be highlighted because in order for the mentor and mentee to benefit, commitment is required from both parties involved in order to be effective. One way to help our youth at Second Chapter of the Youth Division of the Refuge Community Development Corporation is to partner with a Faith Based Organization to form a mentoring program for aged-out foster youth. By becoming a partner, it allows the mentor to show aged-out youth a healthy family and to teach life lessons.

Keeping in mind, these youth have known disappointment; abandonment, tragedy, and loss, the CGMUMC family will play an integral part in the success of the project. Many youth have spent their lives in the foster care system, have lost faith in the church and that faith needs to be restored by reinforcing the essence of God's love for the

[9] GHK, "Volunteering," *USA Commission*, February 2010, accessed February 18, 2016, http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1018_en.pdf.

[10] Mathieu Narcy, "Would Nonprofit Workers Accept to Earn Less? Evidence from France," *Applied Economics* 43, vol. 3 (2011): 313.

[11] Helmut Anheier, *Nonprofit Organizations: Theory, Management, Policy* (Oxon, UK: Routhledge, 2005), 219-221.

oppressed, encouraging the youth to engage in the rhythm and feeling that characterizes the black church experience, and creating an environment where the youth can encounter the presence of the divine through prayer, song, and the preached word. While meeting the social needs of the youth, this project is also intended to instill a strong commitment to membership in the Body of Christ and a spiritual foundation to deal with the contradictions of life. The project will help to transform thoughts of "surviving" to trusting in and leaning on the grace of God. One way to help the youth at Second Chapter of the Youth Division of the Refuge Community Development Corporation is to partner with Charles F. Golden Memorial United Methodist Church through a mentoring program for aged-out foster youth. By becoming a partner, it allows the mentor to show aged-out youth a healthy family and to teach life lessons. Life lessons include tasks such as filling up a gas tank, changing the oil in a car, filing income taxes, or doing laundry at a laundry mat. These are simple yet important lessons that one learns while growing up or maybe while in college. Sponsors and mentors can be that source of support while encouraging the youth to attend church and even build relationships at church. Refuge Community Development Corporation will provide the housing, the training, and the life skills training needed for the mentors of Charles F. Golden Memorial United Methodist Church. One qualification before consideration is that the youth is either in school or working. Most of their counterparts are blessed because they have their parents and a support system that would enable them to receive knowledge on how to be successful. It is because of this that Second Chapter has organized and granted the opportunity to bless kids in care by teaching them about resources that can prevent homelessness and provide guidance on how to become successful.

The mentor program is designed to provide an aged out youth (eighteen to twenty-three) with a special friend aside from family or staff. The responsibility of each mentor is to enhance the life of a youth by establishing a close personal relationship and by providing opportunities the child may not otherwise receive. The program is meant to augment and support the daily care program of Second Chapter. The program is also an opportunity for a volunteer to enrich his or her own life by sharing with a youth. While the youth is in the company of a mentor, the mentor will be responsible for the general care and supervision of the youth. It is the desire of the staff of the Second Chapter of Refuge Community Development Corporation that the mentor will become an integral part of the youth's life and the youth care team. They must be adjusted to the routine of independent living and secure enough to succeed in the mentoring program. These children come from all social, financial, and ethnic backgrounds. Youth have aged out of the Georgia Foster Care system by turning eighteen years of age or have been emancipated, and therefore, the individual meets the sole responsibility of their own care and have nowhere or no one to turn to after aging out. Typically, these youth have experienced abuse in one form or another and have been in and out of the foster care system.

Each one of these youth, no matter what the reasons are for placement, has the same thing in common: a need for healthy relationships. Most of these children have a desire for adult guidance, companionship, and unconditional love. A youth's mentor should plan to see, call, write or have the child in his or her home at least every other week. It is recommended that the youth be able to spend one weekend each month with

their mentor. A mentor must consider carefully the demands of the job and be willing to commit at least one full year to the youth and prayerfully a lifetime.

Other levels and styles of involvement may also be appropriate for a youth. Consistency and dependability in the relationship are critical to the youth. Whatever one agrees to commitment to this program, it is important that the youth's expectations are properly set and that one does their best to uphold those expectations as viewed by the child.

Foster youth may feel isolated and disconnected from others in their life, which makes it harder for them to build relationships.[12] The relationship between foster youth and a mentor is one of the most important relationships that the foster youth will experience. The mentor can model what a healthy relationship looks like. The mentor has to be reliable, supportive, and show the youth how to effectively communicate. The mentor is one of the most consistent people in the youth's life.[13]

Part of transitioning out of foster care is having positive and reliable relationships with others. Research discusses the importance of mentoring programs for foster youth. Mentoring helps empower youth.[14] Sandra Kaplan et al., states that youth mentoring programs aim to provide positive, long-term relationships that help guide the youth to a positive path when they leave care. Through guidance and support a mentor can help the transition process be more fruitful.

[12] Tonia Stott, "Transitioning Youth: Policies and Outcomes," *Children and Youth Services* 35 (2012): 218-227, accessed April 30, 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.1016.j.childyouth.2012.10.019.

[13] Sarah Geenen and Laurie E. Powers, "Tomorrow is Another Problem: The Experiences of Youth in Foster Care during Transition into Adulthood," *Child and Youth Services Review* 29 (2007): 1085-1101, accessed April 8, 2016, 10/1016/j.childyouth.2007.04.008.

[14] Sandra J. Kaplan, Louise Skolnik and Ayme Turnbull, "Enhancing the Empowerment of Youth in Foster Care: Supportive Services," *Child Welfare* 88, no. 1 (2009): 152, accessed May 9, 2016, doi:0009-4021/2009/0109133-161.

Friendships among youth are an important aspect of growing up. Foster youth may have a difficult time making friends due to being in the foster care system. Jeffrey J. Shook et. al., state that a youth needs to have friends that they may be able to lean on for support.[15] A youth's friendship with peers help shape the emotional and cognitive developments of how a youth interacts with others. This may help a youth be more confident and have better skills for navigating life. These peers may sometimes replace the family that the youth is missing. If a youth has more positive relationships in their life, they tend to be more successful with independent living.

Sadly, relationships often are lacking with foster youth. Many foster youth feel disconnected and have a hard time forming relationships with others, as they get older. Additionally, their instability in placements makes it difficult to connect with others. Youth feel a loss of normalcy when they have to leave their placement quickly and do not get the opportunity to say goodbye. With each move, they lose contact with friends and family.[16]

The importance of a caring, stable relationship is depicted as an important foundation of trust upon which new relationships can be formed.[17] Research indicates foster youth have stressed the need of constantly adapting to new rules and expectations with every change in placement affects their sense of self-worth.

Stott and Gustavsson explain the following:

[15] Jeffrey Shook, Michael G. Vaughn, Christy Litschge, Karen Kolivoski and Lisa Schelbe, "The Importance of Friends among Foster Youth Aging out of Care: Cluster Profiles of Deviant Peer Affiliations," *Children and Youth Services Review* 31, no. 2 (February 2009): 287, accessed May 14, 2016, http://doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2008.07.024.

[16] Stott, "Transitioning Youth."

[17] Geenen and Powers, "Tomorrow is Another Problem," 1092.

> The loss and disruption of norms, social networks, education, friendships, and significant relationships that characterizes the placement experiences of some youth in foster care can result in youth disconnecting from relationships. The disconnectedness can hinder youths' abilities to form trusting relationships and thus interfere with their likelihood of attaining legal permanence.[18]

Stott and Gustavsson also stated that placement disruption has been the greatest hindrance to foster youth's success. Youth mourn the loss of significant relationships due to having limited historical and background information, which could affect their ability to relate to others. Youth need stability while in the foster care system. As a foster care youth approach the age of eighteen, they are more than likely going to be exiting the foster care system.

The mentoring ministry ushered in a transformation for many of the members who assisted (and who I consider the cornerstone members) in forming the program. The program served as a vehicle that transported the church members in the direction of compassion for those that are less fortunate than them and afforded them the opportunity to make a difference in a young adult's life. Through the embodiment of the biblical concepts and emphasis' enhanced and encouraged the congregants to become mentors.

[18] Tonia Stott and Nora Gustavson, "Balancing Permanency and Stability for Youth in Foster Care," *Children and Youth Services Review* 32 (2010): 619.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

The purpose of this exegetical analysis is to demonstrate that a Faith Based Organization must biblically provide a continuum of care to support the aged-out foster care youth. God's message is clear, which reeks through the heralds of time is not just for information, but is coherent for imitation and activation—God hates those who do not care for the fatherless. While church history accounts prove that there is a full understanding and acceptance of God's sentiments and continued call for defending and caring for those without parental care, there appears to be a gap in which the church has not filled when care is needed beyond the age of eighteen. The biblical foundation of Exodus 22:21-24 provides clarity of God's concise and repeated call to defend and care for the orphan (fatherless) and likewise, John 13:15-17 as a theological approach to offering a relationship of care (mentoring) to the young adults who have remained in foster care. The argument of this study is that there is a need for faith-based organizations to be equipped, empowered, and educated to become mentors for young adults who have aged out of the foster care system conceptually framing the word of God.

We see God commanding His people to treat the poor and marginalized fairly, to make provisions for them, and allow them to be released every year of Jubilee. He also commands His people to give generously, not begrudgingly. In a very poetic justice kind of way, we see the practices that are condemned: oppressing the poor, mocking the poor,

gloating over disaster, shutting our ears to the cry of the poor, exploiting the poor, crushing the needy in court, closing our eyes to the poor, and not being concerned about justice for the poor. Ignoring the poor shows just as much contempt for God as actively oppressing the poor. However, notice the practices that are blessed: being kind to the needy, lending to the poor, being generous, sharing food with the poor, giving to the poor, caring about justice for the poor, speaking up for those who cannot speak for themselves, judging fairly, and defending the rights of the poor and needy. Being kind to the needy is equated with honoring God, while oppressing the poor shows hatred for our Maker.

We see God speak through the prophets to rebuke Israel for their disobedience, including oppression of the poor and marginalized and a lack of concern for justice. In Isaiah 58:6-7, the Lord deplores those who claim to be religious, yet do not "loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, set the oppressed free and break every yoke." The kind of religion that God honors is "to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter" and "when you see the naked, to clothe him."

In the social context of the early church, as well as in the Old Testament, orphans were part of the fabric of society. Wars, disease, or other life events isolated orphans and widows from the system of care traditionally found within a patriarchal society. Despite the isolation and probable death of orphans, these orphans have been part of a neighboring nation; the authors of the biblical text give specific commands regarding orphan care. These commands fell under the general provisions of hospitality and social justice.

From the outset of the book of Genesis, we are given explanation regarding the role of the family. Married couples are to be fruitful and multiply, following the same pattern given to all of creation. When sin and death interrupts the beauty of creation, new classes of people that fall outside normal societal and familial bounds become the victims in a broken world—namely widows, orphans, and foreigners. In the text of the Hebrew scriptures, almost every instance of the term "orphan" or "fatherless" is paired with that of the widow. Usually their care and provision is provided under the same regulations and restrictions of the foreigner or sojourner among the children of Israel.

A key example is found in Exodus 22. Beginning in verse twenty-one and continuing through verse twenty-two, the text reads as follows: "You shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child."

Based on the recognition that the Israelites once suffered as the lowest members of Egyptian society, they were never to forget that God had spared them from their circumstances and redeemed them to Godself. Beyond the command to avoid exploitation of the widows and orphans comes an understanding that these individuals are so precious to God that he will personally judge those who fail to account for their needs. The discourse continues in Exodus 22:23–24, "If you afflict them in any way, and they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless." This harsh pronouncement demonstrates a couple of key items that need to be considered. First, based on verse 23, we may discern that the widows and orphans have direct access to God. He hears their cries and appeals for help and promises swift action. Second,

avoiding upholding justice for the widow and orphan secures judgment—even death—upon those who look the other way. In the prophets, this becomes one of the burning indictments against the rulers of the house of Israel as they avoided caring for the needs of the widow and orphan.

In the Old Testament, the entire community is commanded to care for the needs of the least of these in their midst. In this respect, orphan care becomes the responsibility of the entire community. There are no instructions for orphanages, not to mention homes for the aged, leading to the claim that adoption is a foreign concept within the Old Testament worldview.[1] Presumably, given the injunctions found in the text, children found homeless were taken in by extended family in order to maintain the hereditary rights of the child as stipulated in the law. Extending protection to these most vulnerable of people, Proverbs 23:10 cautioned, "Do not remove the ancient boundary stones nor encroach on the fields of the fatherless."

Furthermore, the law stipulated that when harvesting in the field, the people of Israel were not to return for sheaves of grain left behind. At the annual grape harvest, the vines were to be picked once and not gone over twice, nor were the olive trees to be beaten twice. That leftover produce served as the portion of the widow, the orphan, and the alien, those who did not have formal care in the community (Dt. 24:17, 19–21). Even during the feasts of "*Shavuot"* and "*Succot*," widows, orphans, and aliens were to be taken in by individual families to celebrate the holiday. The implication was that this was to be a standard practice for all holidays (Dt. 16:11; 14). These case laws of Exodus,

[1] Michael J. Broyde, "Adoption, Personal Status, and Jewish Law," in *The Morality of Adoption: Social-Psychological, Theological and Legal Perspectives*, ed. Timothy P. Jackson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub, 2005), 128–29.

(verses 21-27) revealed to the children of Israel how God expected them to not treat others. He commanded them to not oppress, mistreat, afflict, or exploit others in their need. It should also be noted that the pronouns in this passage are plural. The covenant community would be held accountable for oppression by any of its members. This shows both the seriousness of the offence as well as highlighting the only kind of pluralism that God recognizes.

The difference is that rather than people looking ahead to determine the loving thing to do, God has looked ahead for us. In the Law, He has expressed principles of morality that lead us to what is good. For instance, Deuteronomy 15:4 promises that if Israel will only obey the Law "there will be no poor among you." The Law God gave Israel was to produce a just society and eliminate poverty. Yes, God does know "the loving thing to do." And we can never separate His Law from His love.[2] The Bible is practical and in scripture, God is careful to take abstract ideas and cast them in ordinary situations. Essentially, God provides in the Law multiple illustrations. This is the best way to understand the "Case Law" we find in Exodus 21-23, which follows immediately after the Ten Commandments stated in Exodus 20. The great "thou shalt not's" thundered from Mount Sinai, provide the framework for a moral lifestyle in Israel. They set boundaries, showing clear limits but now in the multiplied cases that follow, God gives insight into the freedom provided within those limitations.[3] What the Law did for Israel was, first of all, to reveal something of the moral character of God. Secondly, it laid out clearly what God expected from Israel. The Jewish people now had a standard against which to measure their thoughts and their actions. Israel had even more; in the Law,

[2] Lawrence O. Richards, *The Teacher's Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1989), 95.

[3] Richards, *The Teacher's Commentary,* 97.

Israel had been given a framework for freedom and blessing. The way of life that Law describes would bring growth and joy, which human beings desire to possess. The Law was to guide Israel into joy by defining clearly those responses to God and to others that would make for a fulfilling life.

Old Testament

> You shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. 23 If you afflict them in any way, and they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry; 24 and My wrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless (Ex. 22:21-24).

God so incredibly loves what was created, especially God's people. In the case laws of verses 21-24 the presentation of how the children of Israel and God's expectation of how not to treat others is revealed. God commanded them to not oppress, mistreat, afflict, or exploit others in need. It should also be noted that the pronouns in this passage are plural. The covenant community would be held accountable for oppression by any of its members. This shows both the seriousness of the offence as well as highlighting the only kind of pluralism that God recognizes.

In what follows are the case laws as they focus on the orphan—the fatherless; the ones to whom God's covenant people are responsible to show His grace (v. 27). They are defenseless in a harsh world—weak and vulnerable. God calls the church to their defense. As we obey, we give demonstration of our faith in an intolerantly gracious God. As Timothy Keller observes, "When God gave the law to Moses, he was constructing a

believing community in which social righteousness was as required as personal righteousness and morality."[4]

We would do well to realize that the believer is called to do so that we will lovingly seek to sacrificially meet the needs of believers. Sadly, what J. C. Ryle said of the church in the late 1800s is still to true today. He says, "There is a common, worldly kind of Christianity in this day. Which many have, and think they have enough—a cheap Christianity which offends nobody, and requires no sacrifice—which costs nothing, and is worth nothing."[5]

The Defenseless

Although resident aliens ("strangers"), widows, and orphans are mentioned, this project solely concentrates on orphans. As John Currid notes, the triad of the widow, stranger, and orphan "becomes idiomatic as a way of speaking of downtrodden and oppressed people."[6] A word coming from a Hebrew root meaning, "to be alone" or "bereaved," often rendered as "fatherless." The idea describes any person who is without legal standing in the covenant community of Israel, who is unprotected or needy, and who is especially exposed to oppression, as well as one bereft (without) of one or both earthly parents.[7]

[4] Timothy Keller, *Ministries of Mercy: The Call of the Jericho Road* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 2007), 41.

[5] J. C. Ryle, *Holiness* (Darlington, SC: Evangelical Press, 1979), 88.

[6] John Currid, *Exodus* (Darlington, SC: Evangelical Press, 2001), 2:140.

[7] Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1595.

Orphan

A child deprived by death of one or usually both parents;

1. A young animal that has lost its mother
2. One deprived of some protection or advantage (*orphans* of the storm)[8]

Hebrew for orphan is יתום, which means, fatherless child, an orphan with a dead father and a widowed mother, as a class of persons helpless and without resource (Dt. 10:18).[9] Such were to be cared for by God's covenantal people. In the words of Walter Kaiser, "Since these people have few or no natural protectors in the society, they were to be shielded in their vulnerable estate."[10]

The Desolate

God here references the "fatherless child" (v. 22). Perhaps there was no class of people in the ancient world that was more vulnerable to mistreatment than orphans. They had no natural protector, they had no immediate covenantal head, and they were at the mercy of those who could take advantage of their desolate condition. Sadly this has been the case for most societies throughout history.

God's people are to defend and care for such individuals. Where God's law is honored, they will be, but why do you suppose that these are identified as special objects of concern? No doubt for a variety of reasons, but Rousas Rushdoony highlights one that should be considered, "Orphans are given especial prominence, not simply because of

[8] Merriam-Webster, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

[9] James Swanson, "Hebrew (Old Testament)," in *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

[10] Walter Kaiser, "Exodus," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 2:439.

their helplessness, but because the protection of the family is basic and essential to God's order.[11] If the family fails, then society falls. God expected His people to care for fatherless children because everyone needs a covenantal head. Everyone needs a family; everyone needs to be connected; everyone needs to be protected and God has given us the supreme example. In the words of Philip Ryken, "God himself became a husband to the widow and a father to the orphan. He established two laws to protect them and provide for them."[12] God protects the vulnerable when they have no protection. Why do we not protect them?

How we treat the desolate is undeniable evidence of whether or not we are believers; it is undeniable evidence of whether or not we know God as our Father. It was James who said, "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world," (Js. 1:27). Prior to Moses' day, Job understood that the treatment of the desolate and the downtrodden was a reflection of one's righteousness. He said, "They [the unrighteous] drive away the donkey of the fatherless; they take the widow's ox as a pledge," (Jb. 24:3).

Another reason why this law is indicative of our true relationship with God is to help those who are desolate without any real prospect of material return. Jesus referred to this principle when He said in Luke 6:34-35,

> And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be

[11] Rousas John Rushdoony, *Commentaries on the Pentateuch* (Vallecito, CA: Chalcedon / Ross House Books, 2004), 319.

[12] Philip Graham Ryken, *Exodus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 738.

> great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.

Thus, in our treatment of such, we are doing so selflessly. Perhaps we are getting ahead of ourselves, for in fact, at this point, the law is not prescribing what to do, but rather, it is pointing out what God prohibits us from doing. He says, "You shall not afflict." The word translated "afflict" means "to oppress," "to trouble" or "to hurt with fetters," (Ps. 105:18). It is translated "weakened" in Psalm 102:23. The word was used to describe the harsh treatment of the taskmasters towards the Israelites in Egypt (Ex. 1:11). Why did the taskmasters so afflict them? Is it sad and revealing of the perversity of the human heart that this law was given? The law is necessary because we are by nature evil. By nature, we take advantage of the weak. God knows this and thus He commands us to refrain from doing so.

Perhaps a more graphic example of what God was revealing about the sinfulness of our hearts as He gave this law is the way that the word is used in Deuteronomy 21:14; 22:24, 29 and 2 Samuel 13:12, 14, 22. In these passages the word clearly refers to the shame and humiliation that one experiences as the result of being sexually violated and raped. This is apropos historically with regard to how the fatherless and widows throughout history have been treated. Amos recognized this correlation when he wrote,

> Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because they sell the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of sandals. They pant after the dust of the earth, which is on the head of the poor, and pervert the way of the humble. A man and his father go in to the same girl, to defile My holy name,"(Am. 2:6-7).

Social Justice

Today statistics show that many foster youth who leave out of care, become prostitutes, simply because they have no one to guide them, no one to covenant with them, no one to defend them. Human nature is such that sinful men tend to take advantage of those who cannot fend for themselves. The church, on the other hand, should be a safety net for such desolation in society. Throughout history, churches have ministered to the needy through orphanages, safe houses and adoption, and the church of the twenty-first century should be no different. In fact, though it has become perverted over the years, the Roman Catholic nunnery has its roots in the biblical injunction for the church to care for orphans.

One objection is that it advocates toward social justice. A lot of churches today have become too concerned with being politically correct as opposed to preaching the true gospel in our effort to minister to the needy.

It is entirely possible to remain true to the gospel while at the same time ministering physically to those in need. That is, in fact, what God expects, according to texts such as the case laws we are studying. All too often, the church is silent on behalf of those who have no one to speak for them (cf. Prv. 31:8-9). We mistakenly think that somehow, social ministry has no real connection to the gospel. How wrong are we? As John Currid points out, "Good theology and social activism are not mutually contradictory, but they should work together. A proper understanding and acting out of the gospel has social consequences."[13] In fact, Derek Kidner makes a good argument that social justice is rooted in God's own activity in Eden. With reference to Genesis 3:21, he writes, "The coats of skins are forerunners of the many measures of welfare, both moral

[13] Currid, *Exodus*, 106.

and physical, which man's sin makes necessary. Social action, now delegated to human hands could not have had an earlier or more exalted inauguration."[14] Perhaps, it is time for the church to take a look and ask the question, what is God calling us to do?

Their Defense

Unless anyone is tempted to overlook God's command in this text, the Lord offers a strong warning, "If you afflict them in any way, and they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless" (vv. 23-24).

In these verses we have another wonderful and glorious revelation of the character of God. We see clearly God's concern for the downtrodden. God is so concerned about the vulnerable in society that God threatens destruction of the people if they mistreat such. Once again, we see both the severity and the mercy of God.

God's people were being called to obey His law. And as they did so they would display the wisdom of God (Dt. 4:1-9) and would prove to be a winsome people (Prv. 11:30). The goal of being winsome was in order that they might win some to their God. The mandate for the new covenant church has not changed at all. We also are to display the wisdom of God and the grace of God by how we treat those who surround us. According to this text, for those who mistreat the orphan, God will not tolerate.

On the other hand, when God's people reflect the compassion and concern of Christ, they bear witness to God's graciousness and mercy. If God's people do not treat the downtrodden in accordance with God's law then the assumption is that the downtrodden will cry out to Him. This would imply that there are people in this world

[14] Keller, *Ministries of Mercy*, 41.

who belong to God and yet they are in need. There is no hint here of any prosperity gospel. These verses do not limit the downtrodden to those in covenant relationship with God, but they certainly include such. Regardless, God hears the cry of the severely afflicted just as He heard the cry of the oppressed and very much afflicted children of Israel in Egypt (3:7; 6:5). Not only does God promise to hear, but He also promises to heed. Literally the text reads, "hearing, I will hear." The next verse tells us what to expect when God "hears," and his promise to those that intentionally overlook the disenfranchised.

In verse twenty-four, God tells us that our mistreatment of the defenseless will result in His anger "becoming hot." The result will be a forest fire of fierceness. The blast of God's nostrils parted the Red Sea (Ex 15:8), and the hot blast of His nostrils will punish those who afflict the fatherless. The language here is very strong. God warned, "I will kill you with the sword." The result would be a lot more orphans to deal with—a nation careless of its disadvantaged will not be allowed to survive. There are national consequences of provoking divine wrath. Or as Alan Cole says, "The society that lacks social justice will itself come under God's judgment."[15]

New Testament

> For I have given you an example that you also should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (Jn 13:15-17).

The love of Jesus for His disciples, and those who would come to be His disciples, is shown in the washing of the disciples' feet. The servant motif, so prevalent in the Gospel

[15] R. Alan Cole, *Exodus* (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 2008), 175.

of Mark (Mk. 10:45), is revealed as well in the Gospel of John. Servanthood is a direct extension and representation of love (13:1). What enabled Jesus to perform this act of utter humility was a keen understanding of who He was, where He had come from, and where He was going (13:3). This is a key to humility in all persons, a healthy and balanced understanding of self. If Jesus, Lord and teacher, washes our feet, how much more should we wash one another's feet (13:14)? What is at hand is not the institution of an ordinance of foot washing, as this passage has sometimes been interpreted, but the lifestyle of humble servanthood. In communicating His vision, Jesus made it clear that what was expected was a commitment that went beyond a personal relationship that could only be demonstrated through His disciples caring for the lost as much as had been demonstrated. Christ realized that some of what was taught might not be understood until much later, but the continued teachings with sensitivity and patience (Jn. 13:7) was on going. Jesus used the disciples' questions in His teaching, and while He had His own teaching agenda, He answered their questions and addressed their concerns (Jn. 13:6).

Biblical Origins of Mentor

While the word "mentor" is not used in scripture, the Greek term *meno* (enduring relationship) is found in the New Testament one-hundred and eighteen times and thirty-three times in the Gospel of John alone. In the farewell message, Jesus repeatedly used the term to express the "steadfast relationship" that was enjoyed by the disciples. Exegetical sources provide us with a variety of synonyms for "mentor" including elder, discipler, and teacher.[16]

[16] Rickie D. Moore, "The Prophet as Mentor: A Crucial Facet of the Biblical Presentations of Moses, Elijah, and Isaiah," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 15, no. 2 (2007): 155.

The variety of Greek words used in the New Testament to express teach, or teacher, are extensive— δάσκαλος (Mt. 7:29), αναθέσει, to instruct systematically (Acts 18:24), "μαθητές , to train disciples (Mt. 28:19), έδωσε , to train, instruct (Heb. 12:6), συνήγορο, to correct, counsel (1 Thes. 5:14), εντολή, to command, order (*Acts 15:5*), and παραδώσει, to hand down tradition (Mt. 11:27). Teaching is clearly at the center of God's plan for redemption. With God as the ultimate teacher, He calls the family and the redeemed community to teach future generations. In the Old Testament, following God meant to trust and obey Him; keep His commandments; and to obey the prophetic word (Nm. 14:24; Jo. 14:8; Dt. 3:3-4; 1 Kgs. 14:8; Dn. 9:10).

Due to their importance in Jesus' call on the disciples, the words follow, and follower are of interest. In the New Testament following of the incarnate Son of God was commanded explicitly, "Follow me" (Mt. 4:19). Following Jesus meant and means to enter into intimate relationship with God and share not only God's kingdom work but also its final reward: eternal life (Lk. 18:30).[17]

Theological Foundation of Mentoring

Is there an approach to mentoring that can be supported theologically? In the tradition of Luther and Calvin, one would first look to the scriptures. In Genesis the second chapter, we find God engaged in a mentoring relationship with Adam. God anticipated Adam's limitations, and provided guidance. God listened to Adam's need, provided him with a partner, and presented a teaching-learning model for the mentor-protégé relationship. While they were not equal in status, they nonetheless had a powerful

[17] Ann Palmer Bradley, "Mentoring: Following the Example of Christ," *ICCTE Journal* 2, no. 9, (Spring 2014): 12.

rapport.[18] The scriptures also point to other significant mentoring associations: Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Barnabas and Paul, Paul and Timothy, and Jesus and the disciples. Examination of their interactions can provide some insight into the power of mentoring relationships.

Moses, the foundational prophet, provided us with a number of examples of fulfilling a mentor's role for an entire nation beginning with the institution of parental instruction to the children of the Passover story as in Exodus 12. He highlighted a shift of attention from the older generation (in the wilderness) to the new (who would enter the Promised Land). He demonstrated that the role of spiritual "elder" was not the exclusive responsibility of the prophet but belonged to all the people of God. God directed him to shift some of his responsibility for meeting the needs of the people to the elders. In Deuteronomy, he was able to focus on discipling a new generation and the teaching and appointment of his successor, Joshua.

Elijah, the leading prophet of the former prophets, exemplified the transmission of a sacred inheritance to the next generation. In Malachi 4:6, God extended a divine call to Elijah to teach and influence the nation, "to turn the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents." The impact of Elijah's mentoring on Elisha was seen as he called him "my father, my father," and pointed to the relationship of a prophetic leader to his disciples (2 Kgs. 2:12). He "poured water on Elijah's hand," a phrase that indicated that Elisha served in an apprentice relationship to Elijah (2 Kgs. 3:11). Ultimately, Elisha inherited from Elijah the role of father to the "sons of prophets," literally donning his cloak after he ascended to Heaven. Isaiah, the greatest prophet of the

[18] T. Beaudoin, "A Spirituality of Mentoring," *American Magazine,* April 7, 2004, accessed October 11, 2014, http://www.americanmagazine.org/content/article.cfm.

latter prophets, realized that, like Moses, he was called to attend to the youth. Isaiah knew the children were significant, and he knew his prophetic call was to be their mentor. Isaiah's appeal to the future generation was for others to take up the call.

The apostle Paul illustrated the succession of mentoring, first as a protégé to Gamaliel and Barnabus, and later as a mentor to Timothy and others. He clearly spelled out the call and importance of mentoring in his letters—"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction," (2 Tm 4:2) Paul explained to the elders at Ephesus, "You know how I lived the whole time I was with you" (Acts 20:17) and "In everything I did I showed you that by this kind of work we must help the weak," (v.35). He reminded them, "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice," (Phil 4:9) and he demanded that they "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ." (1 Cor 11:1) Paul told the congregations, "I showed you, now you show them." His message was that if a Christian leader is not mentoring someone, he or she is not living up to his or her calling.[19]

Jesus was the ideal mentor. His approach incorporated:

> (1) the casting and communicating of a life vision, and (2) teaching via: (a) verbal instruction, and (b) experiential learning in a secure, mutually committed relationship; (3) intimate relationships with (protégés), in which they are allowed to determine some of the direction of teaching based on questions and life circumstances, and; (4) enduring life-long relationships.[20]

[19] Ron Beisterling, "The Mentoring Approach of Jesus as Demonstrated in John 13," *Journal of Youth Ministry* 5, no. 1 (2006): 3.

[20] Moore, The Prophet as Mentor, 158.

In communicating the vision, Jesus made clear that He expected a commitment that went beyond a personal relationship with Him. It could only be demonstrated through His disciples caring for the lost as much as He did by:

1. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them (Jn. 13:15-17).

2. Christ realized that some of what He taught might not be understood until much later but He continuously taught them with sensitivity and patience (Jn. 13:7).

3. Jesus used the disciples' questions in His teaching, and while He had His own teaching agenda, He answered their questions and addressed their concerns (Jn. 13:6).

Jesus used day-to-day dilemmas to illustrate higher truths. Specific issues that arose for them still have profound present day applications in areas such as diversity.

For example, the racial bias illustrated in the parable known as "The Good Samaritan," could just as easily be told when dealing with bigotry today. Jesus' love for His protégés endured through all their failures and imperfections, even though He had to die to help them understand how great was His love for them (Jn. 13:1).

Cultural Context for Mentoring

Alister E. McGrath wrote that in the early nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Liberal Protestantism moved Christian theology from its strict interpretation of scripture toward a more flexible approach that demanded a greater degree of freedom in relation to doctrine and interpretation. This occurred at least to some degree because of the emphasis on a need to relate Christian faith to the human situation. In *Christian Faith*, Friedrich Schleiermacher suggested that theology's function was to analyze the human experience

and as a result, "Religion came increasingly to be seen as relating to the spiritual needs of modern humanity and giving ethical guidance to society."[21]

McGrath wrote that by the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, theologians like Paul Tillich focused on moderating the discussion between Christian faith and human culture.[22] In the mid twentieth century, H. Richard Neibuhr had crafted a theoretical framework to assist in the examination of the relationships between Christianity and culture. His radical social realism maintained that there are five Christian culture paradigms: Christians living in absolute separation from culture; an integration of Christianity and culture; a position that Christianity reveals the answers to culture's questions; and/or the paradox of Christians living in the world; while attempting to obey the authority of God. His fifth model, "Christ the Transformer of Culture," aligns with the views of Calvin, Wesley, and Jonathan Edwards. Here the values and goals of the secular culture are transformed to correspond with those evidenced in the service of God's kingdom.

In a general sense, mentoring may offer a theological connection between Christianity and the goals of the present culture. From ancient to present times mentoring has been essential in the "training up" of the people. Through mentoring the protégé seeks maturity, the integration of all his or her facets: biological, sociological, and psychological. We know that many of life's lessons need to be learned firsthand, so Christ modeled with the disciples how tender teaching after a difficult learning experience can lead to important discussions between mentor and mentee. It can serve as

[21] Friedrich H. Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, ed. H. Mackintosh and James S. Stewart (Edinburgh, UK: T and T Clark, 2000), 52.

[22] Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2016), 70.

a strong foundation for the growth and development of the protégé. The mentor can provide the caring and understanding heart of someone who has walked the same path. A good mentor will use all he or she has on behalf of the protégé. This may even include looking for ways to rid us of the desire to mold a protégé in our image.[23]

It has been established that there is unmistakable evidence of scriptural support to the calling of all God's people to be responsible for mentoring not only the next generation but to mentor those that are destitute and disenfranchised. The disciples needed to learn how to relate to God and what type of people He wanted them to become. They needed to learn to follow, to obey, and to be humble, self-sacrificing, servants. Jesus gave them ministry tasks to help them learn these things and even allowed them to sometimes fail. He always provided them with necessary correction as He mentored them with prayer, example, word, and deed. He provides the same for us and expects the same from us extended out towards those that are in need.

Conclusion

Ironically, the second chapter of this Pentateuchial book of Exodus, opens with the birth of a baby where we see God's finger is apparent in the beginning, the baby was born to a sentence of death (many foster care children are either born into it or thrust into it by happenstance). However, it was under the providential hand of God that life was preserved. With a delicate twist of irony that is marvelously escaping through the syntax pages of the Old Testament, an orphan, a foster care fatherless child—rattles God in such a way that, despite the law of Pharaoh to put all the Hebrew male babies in Egypt to

[23] Beaudoin, "A Spirituality of Mentoring," 58.

death, Moses is not only saved, but Pharaoh hires Moses' own mother to take care of the baby.

Ultimately, Moses was the first identifiable foster child who became the son of Pharaoh that afforded him all the privilege and every advantage possible. The aged-out foster care youth is a rapidly growing problem and one of the most ignored pragmatic accounts within the co-parenting of faith based organizations and the government of the United States of America. Undoubtedly, God firmly conveyed His sentiment as not a warmed suggestion but an adamant proclamation that punishment and judgment would come to those who have abused, those who have neglected, or simply those who have ignored fatherless children.

Moreover, God in holy anger declared a promise of death (Gn. 22:24) to those found guilty of not providing care to those who did not have the acumen of provisions from a parent. Moreover, by highlighting or conveying the heart of God in regards to the care of the fatherless, will ignite and empower those within the communities to expound and explore their hearts to become navigators to foster children.

The term foster care is aptly known in biblical times as “orphan” or "fatherless." It is in the New Testament that the value God places on caring for the fatherless is conveyed in a very profound manner. The community of faith was to play an important role in fathering the fatherless. As in the Old Testament, where provision for the fatherless was woven into the context of the law, God allows the responsibility to continue into the hands of the New Testament community. Again, James articulated the expectation clearly: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to

look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world," (Jas. 1:27).

As we witness the intricacies of God in the beginning chapters of the book of Exodus, such could be the case of millions of foster care youths nestled throughout the world that God has pre-destined for the church to provide influential mentorship to those who have or are aging out of the foster care system. God's revelation of himself as a God who stands in the doorway of justice is the same God who rattles the hinges when injustice has been done to those who are fatherless and disenfranchised. It has been established that there is unmistakable evidence of scriptural support to the calling of all God's people to be responsible for mentoring the next generation. The disciples needed to learn how to relate to God and what type of people He wanted them to become. They needed to learn to follow, to obey, and to be humble, self-sacrificing, servants. Jesus gave them ministry tasks to help them learn these things and even allowed them to sometimes fail. He always provided them with necessary correction as He mentored them with prayer, example, word, and deed. He provides the same for us and expects the same from us extended out towards a dark and desperate world.

No one would deny that rescuing children from ruin and abuse is a good thing, but relatively few make it a priority to rescue those that are considered adults. Caring for and rescuing the orphaned young adults is not an option just as providing a safety net for orphaned children is not. When the theology is pushed, preached and presented in regards to the "aged-out fatherless" then the church, the faith-based community will have a better understanding that God is emphatically concerned with the care of orphans regardless of their ages because he states very boldly in Exodus 22:22-25.

No one should bring harm to the foster child and if they cry out to God, they will be heard and God will kill them and make their children fatherless. To help those that have come into the adolescent age, the faith community must extend the net as a lifeline that will offer stability, structure, sanctity, and safety. Many of them are spiraling down into the hopelessness of drug addiction, prostitution, and or suicide. The faith-based community can be equipped, empowered and educated to assume the role of safety net or life coach for the young adult that has aged-out of the foster care system.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

The placement of children in foster care is a concept that goes as far back as the Torah and Bible, which refers to caring for dependent children as a duty under law. The Quran carried on this tradition of caring for orphans and widows. Early Christian church records indicate orphaned children lived with widows who were paid by the church. English Poor Laws in the 1500's allowed for the placement of poor children into indentured service until they became adults. This practice was imported to the United States and marked the beginning of placing children into foster homes. Even though indentured service permitted exploitation, it was an improvement over almshouses where children did not learn a trade and were exposed to unsanitary conditions and abusive caretakers. At this time, children were placed into these homes because their parents or guardians were deceased rather than because they had been abused in their home, as child abuse was largely socially accepted and legal. Today, foster children are usually removed from a home due to abuse rather than because they were orphaned.

In 1853, Minister Charles Loring Brace founded the Children's Aid Society in New York City. Brace saw many immigrant children sleeping in the streets. Minister Brace started the Orphan Train Movement were over 150,000 orphaned children in New York City were sent by train to farms across the country, primarily in the Midwest. Once sent to the farms, some children were treated with love and respect, while others were

treated as slaves, were abused, and were often required to work long hours. Nevertheless, as the emphasis was on giving abandoned and abused children a family life, Brace's system became the foundation for today's foster care system.[1]

Foster homes in New York City in the 1800s were often abusive. In 1807, an eight-year-old orphan named Mary Ellen Wilson received daily whippings and beatings at her foster home. There was no organization to protect abused children, so the attorneys for the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) took on her case. Her attorneys argued that laws protecting animals from abuse should not be greater than laws protecting children. Mary Ellen Wilson's case went to court and the foster mom was convicted of assault and battery and given a one-year sentence.[2]

In the early 1900's, social agencies began to pay and supervise foster parents. The government began state inspections of foster homes. Records were kept to increase accountability and children's needs were considered when placements were made. In addition, services were provided to birth families to enable the child to reunify or return home. Foster parents were seen as an integral part of a team effort to provide for dependent children.

Before 1945, "fostering" referred to numerous arrangements in which children were cared for in homes other than their own. The point of fostering was to contrast institutional care with family placements. The case for foster care was articulated by nineteenth-century child-savers, including Charles Loring Brace, publicized by the orphan trains, and advanced by states that experimented with placing-out children rather

[1] Shirelle Phelps, ed., *Gale Encyclopedia of Everyday Law*, vol. I (Detroit, MI: Thomson/Gale, 2003), 663.

[2] Howard Markel, "Case Shined First Light on Abuse of Children," *New York Times*, December 14, 2009, accessed December 15, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/15/health/15abus.html?_r=0.

than consigning them to orphanages. In the early twentieth century, the cause was taken up by reformers like Henry Dwight Chapin, a New York pediatrician and founder of the Speedwell Society whose wife established one of the country's first specialized adoption agencies, the Alice Chapin Nursery, in 1910. Henry Chapin circulated statistics showing that orphanages literally sickened and killed alarming numbers of children. His conviction that "a poor home is often better than a good institution" spread quickly among child welfare and public health professionals, but in 1910, there were well over 1000 orphanages in the United States, and their average size had grown considerably since the late nineteenth century. The campaign to make families the only acceptable places to raise children still had a long way to go.

While most young people have access to emotional and financial support systems throughout their early adult years, older youth in foster care, and those who are emancipated from care often face obstacles to developing independent living skills and building support that ease the transition to adulthood. Older foster youth who return to their parents or guardians may continue to experience poor family dynamics or a lack of emotional and financial support, and studies have shown that recently, emancipated foster youth fare poorly relative to their counterparts in the general population on several outcome measures.

An average of 6,000 youth age out of foster care each year in Georgia.[3] Many youth are discharged from care with no social support or assistance, resulting in a lack of basic education, high rates of employment, homelessness, and dependence on public

[3] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "Number of Children Exiting Foster Care by State: FY 2005-FY 2014," July 2015.

assistance programs.[4] Twelve percent of all foster youth report being homeless at least once since discharge from foster care and 41% of homeless young people report spending time in foster care.[5] One-third of foster youth earn below $6,000 per year, which is well below the national poverty level.[6] Foster youth are more likely to have substance abuse issues, become parents soon after aging out of care, or end up incarcerated.[7] One study reports that 56% of youth used "street drugs" while in foster care and 33% of youth report experiencing drug or alcohol problems since leaving care.[8] The federal government recognizes that older youth in foster care and those aging out are vulnerable to negative outcomes and may ultimately return to the care of the state as adults, either through the public welfare, criminal justice, or other systems. Under the federal foster care programs, states may seek reimbursement for youth to remain in care up to the age of twenty-one. In addition, the federal foster care program has certain protections for older youth. For example, states must annually obtain the credit report of each child in care who is age sixteen or older. States must also assist youth with developing what is known as a transition plan. The law requires that a youth's caseworker, and as appropriate, other representative(s) of the youth, assist and support him or her in

[4] Jennifer Pokempner and Lourdes M. Rosado, "Dependent Youth Aging Out of Foster Care: A Guide for Judges," *Juvenile Law Center*, 2003.

[5] Mark E. Courtney, Irving Piliavin, Andrew Grogan-Kaylor, and Ande Nesmith, "Foster Youth Transitions to Adulthood: A Longitudinal View of Youth Leaving Care," *Child Welfare Journal* 80, no. 6 (November/December 2001): 685-717.

[6] P. Mendes, "From Dependence to Independence: Towards Better Outcomes for Young People Leaving the State Care," *Child Abuse Review* 15, no. 2 (March/April 2006): 110-125.

[7] Honoring Emancipated Youth, "Barriers Facing Foster Care Youth: Local and National Statistics about Emancipating Foster Youth," accessed November 2, 2014, https://prollow.s3.amazonaws.com/files/0266e33d3f546cb5436a10798e657d97/1335227502/FosterYouthStatistics.pdf.

[8] Mendes, "From Dependence to Independence," 115.

developing the plan. The plan is to be directed by the youth, and is to include specific options on housing, health insurance, education, local opportunities for mentors, workforce support, and employment services. The plan must address the importance of designating another individual to make health care treatment decisions on behalf of the youth.

Separately, the federal government provides funding for services to assist in the transition to adulthood through the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP). The law enables states to provide these services to youth who are likely to age out of foster care and youth age sixteen or older who left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption. Independent living services may include assistance in obtaining a high school diploma, career exploration, training in daily living skills, training in budgeting and financial management skills, and preventive health activities, among other services. The CFCIP requires that states ensure youth in independent living programs participate directly in designing their own program activities that prepare them for independent living, and further that they accept personal responsibility for living up to their part of the program. The Chafee Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program separately authorizes discretionary funding for education and training vouchers for eligible youth to cover their cost of postsecondary education until age twenty-three. A recent evaluation of independent living programs, such as those that provide mentoring and life skills, shows mixed results. One promising independent living program has social workers that oversee a small caseload (approximately fifteen youth each) and have regular (approximately once a week) interactions with the youth. The youth in this

program are more likely to attend college and stay enrolled than their peers not in the program.

Former President Bill Clinton signed the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 into law on December 14, 1999.[9] Its primary focus was to assist youth aging out of foster care in the United States in obtaining and maintaining independent living skills. Youth aging out of foster care or transitioning out of the formal foster care system are one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged populations. As youth age out of the foster care system at age eighteen, they are expected to become self-sufficient immediately, even though on average, youth in the United States are not expected to reach self-sufficiency until the age of twenty-six.[10]

The purpose of the Foster Care Independence Act is to provide states with flexible funding that will enable children likely to age out of foster care at age eighteen to obtain employment, continue their education, accept personal responsibility, and prepare for the transition from adolescent to adulthood. The program aims to help foster youth transition out of foster care by encouraging self-sufficiency through funding that will allow for states to design and conduct programs that include:

- Assistance obtaining a high school diploma
- Career exploration
- Vocational training
- Job placement and retention
- Budgeting and financial management skills

[9] Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, Public Law 106-169, US Statutes at Large 113 (1999): 1822.

[10] Martha Shirk and Gary Strangler, *On Their Own: What Happens to Kids When They Age Out of the Foster Care System?* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004), 276.

- Training in activities of daily living
- Substance abuse prevention
- Preventive health; such as smoking cessation, nutrition and pregnancy prevention[11]

Program funding is used to provide independent living support services to youth both before and after aging out of foster care. These programs funds support finances, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other supportive programs for transitioning youth. Additional funding promotes interactions with mentors and dedicated adults to provide personal and emotional support to foster youth.

States may apply for funds for a period of five consecutive years through an application process that requires submission of a plan that meets requirements of a program that supports transitioning foster youth. Applications for funding must include plans that are inclusive of 1) How the state will design and deliver programs; and 2) How the state will ensure youth in various stages of transitioning will be served and involve both public and private agencies in planning for independent living. State agencies are expected to administer, supervise, and oversee the programs carried out under the plan.[12]

The Act requires that states receiving funds develop outcome measures to assess the performance of independent living programs. States must measure data that include educational attainment, high school graduation rates, employment, homelessness, non-marital childbirth, and incarceration. States must report data regarding the success of independent living programs to Congress, or be subject to penalties for noncompliance.[13]

[11] Foster Care Independence Act of 1999.

[12] Foster Care Independence Act of 1999.

[13] Foster Care Independence Act of 1999.

The Act also increases healthcare options for youth aging out of foster care by making changes to the Medicaid Law permitting states to provide Medicaid coverage to youth upon aging out of foster care, up to the age of twenty-one.[14] Provisions also allow former foster youth who are considered low income to be provided with Medicaid coverage by permitting foster youths to have assets up to $10,000 without compromising their assistance.[15]

Former First Lady and Secretary of State and Presidential Democrat 2016 Candidate, Hillary Rodham Clinton was instrumental in the passage of the bill by lobbying the United States Congress and holding a youth conference on the issues that were involved. The Foster Care Independence Act was intended to ease the transition into adulthood of foster children who did not get involved.

With the passage of the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, the name of the Independent Living Program was changed to the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program as a testimonial to the late Senator Chafee (R-RI). Senator Chafee was the Senate sponsor of the legislation. Senator Chafee recognized the need for special support and assistance for youth transitioning out of foster care. Senator Chafee was also a vocal advocate for abused and neglected children.

A second Title IV-E program, the Chafee Foster Care Independence program (CFCIP), provides primary federal support, including independent living services to older youth in foster care and youth transitioning out of care.

[14] Foster Care Independence Act of 1999.

[15] Foster Care Independence Act of 1999.

Chaffee Foster Care Independence Program

The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 replaced the prior Independent Living Program with the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. The 1999 law doubled the annual funds available to states for independent living services from $70 million to $140 million. To be eligible for funds, the act required states to expand the population of youth who receive independent living services to include those who have "aged out" of foster care (until their twenty-first birthday) and those of any age in foster care who are expected to leave care without placement in a permanent family. Services may consist of educational assistance, vocational training, mentoring, preventive health activities, and counseling. States may dedicate as much as 30% of their program funding toward room and board for youth ages eighteen to twenty-one, including those youth enrolled in an institution of higher education or who remain in foster care in states that provide care to youth until ages nineteen, twenty, or twenty-one.[16] Room and board are not defined in statute, but typically include food and shelter, and may include rental deposits, rent, utilities, and the cost of household startup purchases. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act funds may not be used to acquire property to provide housing to current or former foster youth. The act also required that youth in the program be actively involved in decisions about the services they receive.

In addition, the law changed the amount of earnings or other resources that foster youth may accumulate to assist in their transition to independent living. Eligibility for foster care maintenance payments under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act is based on whether the children's original families would qualify for AFDC, as of July 16, 1996.

[16] Children's Bureau, "Child Welfare Policy Manual," Section 3.1G, *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*, accessed November 14, 2014, https://acf.hhs.gov/cwpm/programs/cb/laws_policies/laws/cwpm/policy_dsp.jsp?citID=193.

Under those rules, children could not remain eligible for Title IV-E services if they accumulated assets of more than $1,000 however, the asset limit was changed to $10,000. The act also encouraged states to provide Medicaid coverage to youth ages eighteen, nineteen and twenty who have emancipated from foster care by authorizing a new Medicaid eligibility pathway for "independent foster care adolescents," commonly called the "Chafee Option" (see section on Medicaid in "Other Federal Support" below). In 2002, discretionary funds—up to $60 million annually—were authorized for eligible current and former foster care youth to receive education and training vouchers.

The CFCIP varies in its eligibility requirements and purpose from the former Independent Living Program originally established in 1985. Congress created the former program under a new Section 477 of the Social Security Act to assist foster youth ages sixteen to eighteen who met the income and other eligibility criteria of the Title IV-E foster care program. The legislation authorized mandatory funding to states, and states were awarded a share of independent living funds based on the number of children receiving federal foster care payments in FY 1984. In 1987, independent living eligibility was expanded to any foster care children ages sixteen or older (regardless of federal Title IV-E eligibility) and to certain youth for six months after leaving care. The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 gave states the option of providing independent living services to current and former foster youth until age twenty-one, and in 1993, Congress permanently authorized funding for the program at $70 million annually.[17] Former foster youth continue to remain eligible for aftercare services until age twenty-one if they move to another state. The state in which the former foster youth resides—whether or not the

[17] "Child Welfare Policy Manual," 3.1B.

youth was in foster care in that state—is responsible for providing independent living services to the eligible young person.[18]

Along with the CFCIP, other federal programs are intended to help current and former youth in foster care make the transition to adulthood. Federal law authorizes funding for states and local jurisdictions to provide workforce support and housing to older foster youth and youth emancipating from care. Further, the law that established the CFCIP created an optional Medicaid eligibility pathway for youth who age out of foster care; this pathway is often called the "Chafee Option." Beginning in 2014, eligible young people who emancipate from foster care will be covered under a mandatory Medicaid pathway until age twenty-six. In addition, youth in foster care or recently emancipated youth are specifically eligible for certain education services.

Several states have developed recommitment policies for youth who have been discharged from care that specify a time limit in which they may be eligible for services. Under such a policy, youth who turn age eighteen while in runaway status may re-enter care to receive services.[19] The Chafee Foster Care Independence Act further requires states to provide certain services to youth based on their age or whether they were in foster care at a specific age. States may provide room and board with CFCIP funds and Medicaid through the Chafee pathway only to those youth who are eligible for CFCIP services. Youth are eligible for an education and training voucher (until age twenty-three) if they emancipate from care or were adopted from care at age sixteen or older. However,

[18] "Child Welfare Policy Manual," 3.1F.

[19] National Foster Care Coalition, "Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act: Frequently Asked Questions on the Provisions Designed to Impact Youth and Young Adults," *Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative*, June 2009, 9.

to be eligible for a voucher at age twenty-two or twenty-three, they must have received one at age twenty-one.

States administer their independent living programs in a few ways. Some programs are overseen by the state independent living office, which employs an independent living coordinator and other staff. For example, in Maine, the state's independent living manager oversees six specialized life skills education coordinators assigned to cover all of the state's district offices for the Department of Health and Human Services. In some states, like California, each county (or other jurisdiction) administers its own program with some oversight and support from a statewide program. Other states, including Florida, use contracted service providers to administer their programs. Many jurisdictions have partnered with private organizations to help fund and sometimes administer some aspect of their independent living programs.

In 2002, Congress passed legislation to authorize discretionary funding to eligible current and former foster care youth for education and training vouchers worth up to $5,000 annually per youth (states may determine the annual period to which to apply the $5,000 ceiling). Youth qualify for a voucher if they are eligible for CFCIP services or were adopted from foster care after sixteen years of age.

The vouchers are available for the cost of full-time or part-time attendance at an institution of higher education, as defined by the Higher Education Act of 1965. A current fiscal year's ETV funds may not be used to finance a youth's educational or vocational loans incurred prior to that current fiscal year. Students may receive the vouchers if they are in good standing and making progress toward completing their program or graduating, though states may have additional requirements such as

periodically meeting with a caseworker or limiting the funding to a certain number of semesters.[20] Only youth receiving a voucher at age twenty-one may continue to participate in the voucher program until age twenty-three.

Funding received through the ETV program does not count toward the student's expected family contribution, which is used by the federal government to determine a student's need for federal financial aid (even for those students who are classified as independent, meaning that their parental financial information is not included in the financial aid analysis). However, the total amount of education assistance provided under the CFCIP and other federal programs may not exceed the total cost of attendance, and students cannot claim the same education expenses under multiple federal programs.

States and counties may use ETV dollars to fund the vouchers and the costs associated with administering the program, including salaries, expenses, and training of staff who administer the state's voucher program. States are not permitted to use Title IV-E Foster Care or Adoption Assistance program funds for administering the ETV program.[21] They may, however, spend additional funds from state sources or other sources to supplement the ETV program or use ETV funds to expand existing post-secondary funding programs.[22] Several states have scholarship programs, tuition waivers, and grants for current and former foster youth that are funded through other sources.

Generally, states administer their ETV program through their independent living program. Some states, however, administer the program through their financial aid office (e.g., California Student Aid Commission) or at the local level (e.g., Florida, where all

[20] National Foster Care Coalition, "Fostering Connections," 7.

[21] National Foster Care Coalition, "Fostering Connections," Section 3.5C, Question 5.

[22] National Foster Care Coalition, "Fostering Connections," Section 3.5C, Question 6.

child welfare programs are administered through community-based agencies). Some states contract with a non-profit service provider, such as the Orphan Foundation of America or the Student Assistance Foundation. For example, the Orphan Foundation of America (OFA), a non-profit child welfare organization, contracts with nine states (Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Indiana, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, and New York) to administer their ETV programs. OFA's administrative fee is capped at 12% of funds disbursed on behalf of a state. Orphan Foundation of America is involved in all aspects of program administration, including identifying eligible youth for the program; maintaining a database with financial records, youth demographics, and youth outcomes for the nine states; training child welfare staff about the ETV program; and providing over-the-phone financial aid counseling to ETV recipients in the nine states. Students identified as at risk of dropping out because of their grades receive academic counseling by OFA staff.

Youth may enroll in the program if they are in care or have aged out of care. The state with the placement and responsibility for a youth in foster care is to provide the voucher to that youth. The state must also provide a voucher to any youth who is currently receiving a voucher and moves to another state for the sole purpose of attending an institution of higher education.[23] If a youth permanently moves to another state after leaving care and subsequently enrolls in a qualified institution of higher education, he or she can apply for a voucher in his or her current state of residence. States must provide a 20% match (in-kind or cash) to receive their full federal CFCIP and ETV allotment. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program funds are often mixed with state, local, and other funding sources to provide a system of support for youth likely to age out of care

[23] National Foster Care Coalition, "Fostering Connections," 7.

and those who have emancipated. To be eligible for CFCIP general and ETV funds, a state must submit a five-year plan (as part of its Child and Family Service Plan (CFSP) and Annual Progress and Service Report (APSR)) to HHS that describes how it intends to carry out its independent living program. Under Section 477 of the Social Security Act, HHS must approve a state's plan for independent living services if it contains all of the required materials. The plan must be submitted on or before June 30 of the calendar year in which the plan is to begin. States may make amendments to the plan and notify HHS within thirty days of modifying the plan. Health and Human Services is to make the plans available to the public. Mandatory and discretionary funds provided under the CFCIP may only supplement, rather than supplant, any funds from other federal sources (e.g., Social Services Block Grant or Runaway and Homeless Youth program) or non-federal sources that may be available for independent living programs in the state.

States may apply to receive mandatory funds for the six purposes specified in the CFCIP:

1. To identify children who are likely to remain in foster care until eighteen years of age and to help these children make the transition to self-sufficiency by providing independent living and related services.

2. To help children who are likely to remain in foster care until eighteen years of age receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment.

3. To help children who are likely to remain in foster care until eighteen years of age prepare for and enter postsecondary training and education institutions.

4. To provide personal and emotional support to children aging out of foster care, through mentoring and positive interactions with caring adults.

5. To provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between ages eighteen and twenty-one years to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept

personal responsibility for making the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

6. To make available education and training vouchers for youth who have aged out of care.

States may also use CFCIP funding to establish trust funds for youth eligible under the program (Section 3.3E, Question 1). However, states may not use CFCIP funds to train foster parents, workers in group homes, and case managers in issues confronting adolescents. States may use funding under the Title IV-E Foster Care program or Adoption Assistance program for this purpose.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and ETV funds are distributed to each state based on its proportion of the nation's children in foster care. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 provides $140 million in mandatory funding for the CFCIP and $45.4 CRS-25 million for the ETV program. Placement of children in foster homes is a concept that goes as far back as the Old Testament, which refers to caring for dependent children as a duty under law. Early Christian church records indicate orphaned children lived with widows who were paid by the church. English Poor Laws in the 1500's allowed the placement of poor children in indentured service (slavery) until they became adults. This practice was imported to the United States and was the beginning of placing children into foster homes. Even though indentured service permitted exploitation, it was an improvement over almshouses where children did not learn and were exposed to unsanitary conditions and abusive caretakers.

Conclusion

Christians caring for orphans has been a part of Christendom since the earliest days of the church and the government has played the justice role that God gave to it to protect children in severe neglect and abuse. However at the same time, the government makes a terrible parent. The church can help to fill the relational void (in a medicinal kind of way) by reawakening its historical role of providing caring for those that are literally drowning in a body of water without a safety net in sight.

A concern is that the church is woefully uncommitted to the plight of aged-out foster care youth within the context of their home cultures. Welfare-state governments and secular institutions in progressive nations have assumed responsibilities that have historically and biblically belonged to the church. The church, accordingly, has lost sight of the tremendous needs of the foster care everywhere and has forfeited her responsibilities and blessings. Perhaps we engage in debate in order to disinfect the heart of the matter even within the church. God's people worldwide must take on the mantle of responsibility in responding to the current foster care crisis.

After leaving home for the first time, most young adults still rely on their parents for good advice, living skills, and financial help. However, there is no support system for Aged Out foster care teens. They have no one to call when they mess up a recipe or get a flat tire. They have no one to listen when they endure a bad breakup or fail an exam. They have no one to support them through their first real job, their first adult relationship, and their first time living on their own. Approximately 26,000 foster care teen's age-out of the foster care system each year. Once they leave the system, their state and foster

families are no longer required to give them assistance. They are left to fend for themselves.

Edward Washington knows about fending. The eldest of twelve children who was born to a single mother, who was a single parent after leaving his heroin-addicted father, he and his siblings entered foster care because of parental neglect when he was fourteen. He says, however, that moving into a group home with seven other boys, two house parents and a fatherly social worker provided a stable environment after the tough Atlanta housing project he came from. "A lot of people have bad experiences in foster care," Washington, now thirty-two, told me. "But for me, it saved my life."[24]

The familial atmosphere shifted during Washington's senior year of high school, when he clashed with the new social worker assigned to his home. At eighteen, he started attending Morris Brown College (Atlanta, GA) and lived on campus—until classes let out for the summer. His mother, financially unstable and without a place of her own, could not take him in. "I tried going back to the group home, but I could not stay there because I had aged out," he said. "I hid out in my dorm until the school made me leave. I have never felt so helpless."[25] Dragging his few belongings in a plastic trash bag, Washington returned to the projects where he grew up and crashed on old neighbors' couches for as long as he could. On nights when he could not find a place to stay, he would sit in a nearby park and try to stay awake until the sun came up.

Washington, who made plans to stay with close friends each subsequent summer, says he was more fortunate than people who aged out of the system and wound up on the street for years. Today he works for Georgia EmpowerMent, an advocacy group that

[24] Edward Washington, interview by author, Atlanta, GA, October 23, 2014.

[25] Edward Washington, interview by author, Atlanta, GA, October 23, 2014.

helps people exiting the system find a permanent place to live. "Especially back when I was leaving foster care thirteen years ago, people aging out just had nowhere permanent to go," he said, “adding that although his state now does a far better job, former foster children still need assistance.”[26] The church can serve as the safety net. With just a few hours, a foster care teen can enter into the adult world successfully and a big impact can be made through a mentoring program.

Mentoring gives foster care teens a listening ear and a friend to guide them through their struggles. The mentoring possibilities for the aged-out foster care youth is endless and full of potentials, which can:

- Create a systematic fool proof mentoring program my partnering with an Independent Living Services Provider.
- Create a Foster College Scholarship Fund
    - Donate school supplies
    - Give bookstore gift certificates
    - Provide tutoring
- Provide Transportation
- Donate Supplies
    - Household goods directly to the Foster Youth
    - Send/take care packages
- Donate Services

Whatever the talents may be, they can be utilized to make a difference.

Unfortunately, many foster care teens do not have the support and life skills necessary to live on their own. Foster care studies show that 40 to 63% of aged-out foster kids have not earned a high school diploma or GED. A three-state survey showed that by age twenty-four, more than a third of aged-out foster kids had been homeless for at least

[26] Edward Washington, interview by author, Atlanta, GA, October 23, 2014.

thirty days and more than half of them were not working. In addition, nearly 60% of the men had been convicted of a crime. Because they lack the support systems most young adults take for granted, aged-out foster care teens are at high risk for substance abuse, domestic violence, and poverty.

There are so many things young adults with families can take for granted. What happens when you are in college or in your first apartment and you do not have enough money to do laundry? Most kids can call mom, dad, grandma, or grandpa and ask for a few packs of quarters. There are life skills teenagers need to learn to make a smooth transition to adulthood—things like finding a job and an apartment, learning how to drive, balancing a checkbook, etc.—but according to Celeste Bodner, executive director of FosterClub (a national peer support network for young people in and from foster care), the most critical issue is permanence and having the safety net of people to connect to as you age out. Bodner says this is the make-or-break factor for young people, often determining whether or not they will succeed in life or become another statistic.[27] Becoming a mentor for the aged out foster care youth may not be for everyone, but it offers the opportunity to truly make a difference and can be extremely rewarding. For the Christian especially, it provides the means by which one let their 'light so shine before men, that they may see the good works and glorify the Father which is in heaven' (Mt. 5:16). This is true not only in the life of the youth, but also to the mentor (with whom there is plenty of interaction) and not to mention those in our own church family. Mentoring to and for the aged-out foster care youth can be a great blessing beyond compare. It must be a true calling, one that pulls at the heartstring. "The steps of a good

[27] Chelsea Badeau, "No Kid Should Age Out of Foster Care Alone in America," *FosterClub*, May 28, 2009, accessed November 7, 2014, https://www.fosterclub.com/_advocacy/news/no-kid-should-age-out-foster-care-alone-america.

man are ordered by the Lord: and he delights in his way" (Ps 37:23). Steps will be ordered and involvement will become overflowing.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Far too many youth in foster care lack the adult support that is so necessary to help them through this difficult transition. This research is a practical implementation of theological concepts in a social context and an examination of what God demonstrated and stated emphatically in regards to our responsibility of caring for the poor, for the marginalized and for the fatherless within our society. This theological foundation is an examination of sources that inform my theological views towards pastoral care as it relates to faith-based communities becoming mentors to aged out foster care youth.

Throughout the Bible, we are exhorted to care for one another. In a broken and unstable world, offering care for one another is one of the most important things the church can do. Over the past 150 years, the church has abdicated its role in the ministry of caring, concentrating its efforts instead on preaching and teaching and ignoring the third leg of Christ's mandate to his disciples: caring for the orphans.

Each year, millions of children are removed from their homes and placed in foster care, usually as a result of abuse or neglect. Perhaps not surprisingly, as compared with other children, youth in foster care experience a range of mental health problems, including depression, aggression, and withdrawal. They often suffer grief due

to the separation from or loss of relationships with their natural parents. In addition, they may have difficulty adjusting to new and often changeable school and home environments. Children in foster care are also at heightened risk for educational and behavioral difficulties. A distressing 65% of the eighteen-year-olds leaving foster care have failed to complete high school.[1] Further, as they age out of the foster care system they face a number of other risks, including unemployment, substance abuse, pregnancy, and involvement with the criminal justice system.[2]

Religious organizations offer a potentially rich pool of caring adults who are driven by their own spiritual commitments and strong ethics to serve others.[3] Indeed, more Americans volunteer through religious organizations than through any other venue. Religious organizations account for half of all volunteering, with an estimated 60% of the members of religious congregations engaging in volunteerism.[4]

It appears that mentoring, especially through faith-based organizations, has a potentially important role to play in the emotional and spiritual development of aged-out foster care youth. A religious congregation represents a rich intergenerational network of people who are products of the connectional comfort of parents' friends, extended family

[1] Brenda Jones Harden, "Safety and Stability for Foster Children: A Developmental Perspective," *The Future of Children* 14, no. 1 (Winter 2004): 31-47.

[2] Ruth Massinga and Peter J. Pecora, "Providing Better Opportunities for Older Children in the Welfare System," *The Future of Children* 14, no. 1 (Winter 2004): 150-173.

[3] Kenneth I. Maton and Mariano R. Sto. Domingo, "Mobilizing Adults for Positive Youth Development: Lessons from Religious Congregations," in *Mobilizing Adults for Positive Youth Development* (New York, NY: Springer, 2006), 159-175.

[4] Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse And Revival of American Community* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 62-80.

members, and spiritual models who can help shape and reinforce not only behavioral and academic outcomes but also spiritual development.[5]

The biblical call to care for orphans is clear. From a reference in almost a dozen of the Psalms to James' description of religion that is pure, we hear the mandate to defend, rescue, and liberate children who are parentless. Isaiah 1:17, is quite explicit in calling us to "learn to do good, seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow." The church is learning to be faithful to this call. In new and exciting ways, Christians are saying they cannot sit idly by as so many children struggle to make their way through life. Christians know they must respond; they are not always sure how to offer the best response.

Theological Theme

Pastoral care is a topic that of late has been the subject of growing interest in traditional, professional, and clinical circles; a concept that has been emerging with new ideas, thoughts, and consideration outside and from within the faith-based community. In order to understand it, you must understand the foundation of pastoral care and its historical and traditional application.

Christian pastoral care is that activity within the ministry of the church, which is centrally concerned with promoting the well being of individuals and communities. The ultimate aim of pastoral care is that of ministry as a whole, that is, to increase love between people and between people and God. Its specific functions are healing, sustaining, reconciling, guiding and nurturing. Although pastoral care has been a feature

[5] Mark D. Regnerus, "Religion and Positive Adolescent Outcomes: A Review of Research and Theory," *Review of Religious Research* 44, no. 4 (June 2003): 394–413.

of the Christian church since the earliest times, a substantial body of theories did not form around it before the present century. There has been a tendency towards a theoretical pastoral pragmatism that concentrates on what is functional in particular situations.[6]

Pastoral Care Defined

Pastoral care is being a presence and giving holistic care and support for the wellbeing of others, a ministry of presence. It is the act of care giving, an act of helping. Pastoral care is person centered and considers the whole wellbeing of the person. It is more than a spiritual approach, but an active response to a practitioner's inner most value to help, a spiritual value that has a special consideration for life and the life of people; a consideration that cares about the physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of others, a word of action and ministry of the heart.

The term pastoral care refers to the practical art of representatives of the Christian church who offer caring ministry to persons in distress. That distress may be spiritual, relational, emotional, or situational. Pastoral care is an interdisciplinary interface between theology and human lives. While theology is only part of that interface (psychology being another), it is an important part. Howard Stone observed that theology is the template that a minister uses as an automatic framework, much as medicine is the template for the doctor.[7]

[6] Alister E. McGrath, *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993), xiii, 701.

[7] Howard W. Stone, *Theological Context for Pastoral Caregiving* (Binghamton, NY: Haworth Pastoral Press, 1996).

Emmanuel Lartey's definition of pastoral theology, is the "reflection on the caring activities of God and human communities."[8] This infers that there is intentionality in the very act of God towards humanity and that should be the model for the way the church enacts its pastoral care to society.

Care Of Souls

The care of souls is the traditional term for pastoral care. The primary meaning of the Latin word *cura* is care, although it also includes the notion healing. The word *anima* was the most common Latin translation of the Hebrew *nephesh* ("breath") and the Greek *psych* ("soul").[9] The term care of souls is used in variations. First, its broad use sums up the work of the office of priest, including worship, preaching, visiting, and organizing parish life. In this sense, care of souls acknowledges that all acts of ministry have as their ultimate aim the salvation and perfection of persons under God. Second, in a narrower sense, care for souls describes a particular strand of pastoral care tradition, *Seelsorge*, stemming from the Reformation and especially prominent in Lutheran pastoral theology.

In Christianity

The Bible does not explicitly define the role of a pastor, but does associate being a presence in 'pastoring' with teaching, and involves shepherding (caring for)the flock (the people). This is a loving way of caring for people rather than controlling them.

[8] Emmanuel Y. Lartey, "The Nature of Pastoral Theology," in *Pastoral Theology in an Intercultural World* (Peterborough, UK: Epworth Press, 2006), 14-41.

[9] Glenn H. Asquith, Jr., ed., *The Concise Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), 7.

Shepherding involves protection, tending to or caring for needs, strengthening the weak, encouragement, feeding the flock, making provision, shielding, refreshing, restoring, and leading by example; to move people on in their pursuit of holiness, comforting, and guiding. Any person can acquire the knowledge, skill, and experience to perform a job description, but it takes a certain type of inner values that drives a person to want to care about the wellbeing of others and be able to perform it dutifully, and effectively.

Caring starts within the heart, individual values, and how those values are articulated; how that person is in terms of care and how that person feels about caring for others and their willingness to do so unmotivated by fame, fortune or prestige. A shepherd, (shepherd being a metaphor) feels an inner spiritual obligation and duty and a willingness to accept that duty to be a presence for others and to care about the wellbeing of others regardless of the circumstances. A shepherd does what is within their bounds to do to give care to another person to give or provide what is needed, take care of, protecting, advocating for, encouraging, shielding, were possible creating the environment needed, motivating, teaching, assisting and following up with people as needed.

Roman Catholicism

In Catholic theology, pastoral care for the sick and infirmed is one of the most significant ways that members of the Body of Christ continue the ministry and mission of Jesus. Pastoral care is considered to be the responsibility of all the baptized. Understood in the broad sense of helping others, pastoral care is the responsibility of all Christians. Sacramental pastoral care is the administration of the sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation,

Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, Matrimony) that is reserved to consecrated priests, except for Baptism (in an emergency anyone can baptize) and marriage, where the spouses are the ministers and the priest is the witness. Pastoral care was understood differently at different times in history. A significant development occurred after the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.

The Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) applied the word pastoral to a variety of situations involving the care of souls. Many Catholic parishes employ Pastoral Associates, lay people who serve in ministerial or administrative roles, assisting the pastor in his work, but who are not ordained clerics. They are responsible, among other things, for the spiritual care of the frail and housebound as well as for running a multitude of tasks associated with the sacramental life of the church. However, these tasks are also and primarily a part of the role of the ordained clergy, especially the deacons and priests assigned to the parish that are entrusted with administering most of the sacraments. If priests have the necessary qualifications in counseling or psychotherapy, they may offer professional psychological services when they give pastoral counseling as part of their pastoral care of souls. However, the church hierarchy under John Paul II and Benedict XVI has emphasized that the Sacrament of Penance, or Reconciliation, is for the forgiveness of sins and not counseling, and as such, should not be confused with or incorporated into the therapy given to a person by a priest, even if the therapist priest is also their confessor.

The two processes, both of which are privileged and confidential under civil and canon law, are separate by nature. Youth workers and youth ministers are also finding a place within parishes, and are looking holistically at the youth of the community, and this

involves their spirituality and connectedness to the community and their faith. It is very common for youth workers and or ministers to be involved in pastoral care, and are required to have a qualification in counseling before entering into this arm of ministry. Youth ministers who do not have this type of qualification should aim to avoid taking on the psychological assessments, however, by the nature of their work, they are somewhat predisposed to this type of care.

Eastern Orthodox

The pastoral obligations of Orthodox clergymen are set out by St. John Chrysostom (347-407) in his treatise On the Priesthood. This is perhaps the first really great pastoral work ever written, although he was only a deacon when he penned it. It stresses the dignity of the priesthood. The priest, it says, is greater than kings, angels, or parents. Priests, however, are for that reason most tempted to pride and ambition. They, more than anyone else, need clear and unshakable wisdom, patience that disarms pride, and exceptional prudence in dealing with souls.

Pastoral care, therefore, is seen as care provided by a pastor, priest, other ordained clergy or pastoral care practitioner, and may be under the direction of a pastor, chaplain, ministry or hospital and is supportive to the physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of people and includes encouraging, and providing support, identifying needs, facilitating problem solving, helping people attain their own empowerment to progress in their wellness needs. Pastoral care has also be a term generally applied to the practice of looking after the personal and social wellbeing of any individual, including children under the care of a teacher. Pastoral care can encompass a wide variety of issues

including health, social and moral education, behavior management, and emotional support.

By all accounts, pastoral care has a long and rich religious history founded well before modern medicine, and has been a term applied where individuals who desired, wanted or felt a spiritual inclination or appointment to do so offered help in the form of care, support, and advocacy for others in their church and wider community. Pastoral care in this sense was applied to listening, supporting, encouraging, and befriending, visiting at the residence, or in the community i.e., hospitals, nursing homes, and jails.

Theology, of course, is understood here in a simple sense as the reflective discipline in which persons seek to think consistently and faithfully about God and the faith. Theology is rational and reflective thinking. Theology is not the faith, but it is reflection on the faith. Individuals can have a wonderful faith without having a well-developed theology. On the other hand, one can have a well-developed theology without necessarily having a mature faith.[10]

Pastoral theology arises from the practice of pastoral care and conversation with other disciplines. Pastoral theology is theology with a specialized focus. It is reflection that is directed to and inspired by the questions and problems that arise from concrete situations. It is not simply movement from received faith to application, however, for Christian theology also is shaped by the hard questions and concerns that real experience raises.[11]

[10] Gary A. Furr, "Intersections of Grace: Theology and Pastoral Care," *The Theological Educator* 57 (Spring 1998): 72-81.

[11] Furr, "Intersections of Grace," 75.

Liberation Theology

Liberation is one of the great slogans of modern politics and one of the major themes of the Bible. The exodus from Egyptian bondage was the foundational narrative of the Jewish nation, and Jesus inaugurated his ministry by announcing that he had come 'to release the oppressed.' Scripture teaches that Christ brings redemption from slavery to sin, but it also depicts deliverance from material forms of oppression. Drawing from European theologies and Marxism, Latin American theologians developed their own theology by radically reinterpreting scripture with a bias toward the poor.

Liberation theology begins with the premise that all theology is biased—that is, particular theologies reflect the economic and social classes of those who developed them. Like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, liberation theologians say theology must start with a view from below—that is, with the sufferings of the oppressed. Within this broad framework, different liberation theologians have developed distinctive methodologies for "doing" theology.

Gustavo Gutierrez, author of *A Theology of Liberation*, provides us with a representative methodology. Like other liberationists, Gutierrez rejects the idea that theology is a systematic collection of timeless and culture-transcending truths that remains static for all generations. Rather, theology is in flux; it is a dynamic and ongoing exercise involving contemporary insights into knowledge, humanity, and history. Gutierrez emphasizes that theology is not just to be learned, it is to be done. In his thinking, "praxis" is the starting point for theology. Praxis (from the Greek word Στην εργασία to work, involves revolutionary action on behalf of the poor and oppressed—and out of this, theological perceptions will continually emerge. The theologian must

therefore be immersed in the struggle for transforming society and proclaim his message from that point.

In the theological process, then, praxis must always be the first stage; theology is the second stage. Theologians are not to be mere theoreticians, but practitioners who participate in the ongoing struggle to liberate the oppressed. “Liberation theology does not ask what the church is, but rather what it means to be the church in a context of extreme poverty, social injustice, and revolution. In the context of liberation theology the mission of the church seems to be more important than its nature."[12]

Gutierrez and other liberation theologians say the church's mission is no longer one of a quantitative notion of saving numbers of souls.[13] Rather, the church's mission "is at all times to protest against injustice, to challenge what is inhuman, to side with the poor and the oppressed."[14] Therefore, if liberation theology involves the “doing of a work,” then the care of the aged out foster care individual is certainly a justifiable cause when paired with pastoral care.

James Henry Harris in his book, *Pastoral Theology* says that pastoral theology is liberation theology because it is grounded in praxis…It deals with developing and implementing policies and programs in the church and community that convey the meaning of Christianity in practical life situations.[15] Harris further contends that persons struggling are not interested in arguments about the existence or color of God. They are

[12] Emilio Nunez, "The Church in the Liberation Theology of Gutierrez," in *Biblical Interpretation and the Church*, ed. D. A. Carson (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984), 174.

[13] Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1971), 175.

[14] Monika Hellwig, "Liberation Theology: An Emerging School," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 30 (1977): 141.

[15] James H. Harris, *Pastoral Theology: A Black Church Perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), ix.

instead interested in what God can do to help them with their issues. The liberationist theological aims are focused at equipping members of faith based communities to mentor young adults who have aged out of the foster care system.

How does God exhibit acts of care? Quite often when we consider God's actions in the Hebrew scriptures we perceive a wrathful God who destroys nations and demands justice of those who do not follow God's laws. Very often we also see humanity pleading with God to show mercy for themselves or others, so as to avert God's wrath. However, the question must be addressed: is this a true image of God? If then, God's very nature is to act on behalf of another, and we are to exhibit that, then as the church are we just to preach the gospel, or is there more to the care we are to incarnate?

During the 1960's, Paulo Friere, a Brazillian lawyer, instituted a program called conscientization, which aimed at equipping people with a critical reflective knowledge of reality, which would enable them to discern their true situation, which lead to historical commitment and action to change dehumanizing social structures. In essence, Friere evolved made significant progress in what is needed now, in the twenty-first Century. Churches need to be equipped with the knowledge of what they are *not* doing for the aged out foster care so that they can in turn empower the youth to become changed agent to revolutionize a marginalized society.

From a historical culture and from the lens of a different setting, the black church has always produced both the leaders and the troops who launched great movements and the responsibility for spreading awareness of the oppressed. However, it appears that the black church has taken a back seat to liberating the disenfranchised. The black church was the creation of black people whose daily existence was an encounter with the

overwhelming and brutalizing reality of white power. For the slaves, it was the sole source of identity and the sense of community. The black church became the only sphere of black experience that was free of white power. For this reason, the black church became the center for emphasis on freedom and equality.[16]

The underlying theme to black theology is that God identifies with the oppressed. Similarly today, blacks have formed cohesion between church and politics so that a theological expression of the desire for social freedom is natural. The theology of liberation, then, is seen as the fulfillment and deliverance of theology from the abstract to place it in concrete situations in life, into the heat of the battle. McCall says, "Liberation theology represents attempts to move theology from the abstract to practical life situations, to call attention to the social implications of the gospel that have generally been ignored by Western nations."[17]

Theological Issues

An issue with the biblical mandate to live in covenantal community is rooted in the postmodern definition of community. Modern communities are quite different from the Jewish community of Exodus or the Johannine community of the Fourth Gospel. Although the Johannine community was becoming increasingly strained by differing Jewish and Christian theologies and ideologies, it was much easier to identify communities by intent, belief, resources, preferences, and needs. Advances in technology

[16] Harris, *Pastoral Theology: A Black Church Perspective*, 96.

[17] Emmanuel McCall, “Black Liberation Theology: A Politics of Freedom,” *Review and Expositor* 73 (1976): 323–333.

have dramatically changed the concept of community, which poses issues with the theme of covenantal community and where the responsibility for caring for the poor must rest.

As early as the 1900's, Rauschenbusch introduced the concept of Theological Readjustment. Rauschenbusch suggested that theology needs periodic rejuvenation, that the "dogmas and theological ideas of the early Church were those ideas which at that time were needed to hold the church together, to rally its forces, and to give it victorious energy against antagonistic powers."[18] This was surely relevant in John's Gospel where the Jews in that community barred Christians from worshipping in the synagogues. The writer of John's gospel would have been compelled to highlight Jesus' mandate for this community to demonstrate humility and the servant's responsibility**.**

Rauschenbusch further points out the issues modern social Christianity has on the covenantal community as a problem of capitalistic industrialism which becomes acute when a country becomes industrialized, suggesting that as nations develop, it is more difficult to define communal boundaries.[19]

The issue then becomes, is disobedience to God's mandate the root cause of the prevalence of poverty or the socio-economic and socio-political ills of industrialized and technologically advanced societies? How does one untangle the theological and ethical web of caring for the poor and needy, particularly in the context of this chapter, the young adults who have aged out of foster care?

James Cone in his book, *God of the Oppressed*, contends, "Theology is the church's reflection upon the meaning of faith—claim that God's revelation is identical

[18] Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (New York, NY: The Macmillan Co., 1992), 14.

[19] Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel,* 46.

with the historical freedom of the weak and helpless."[20] Cone further contends that one seldom finds an ethic of liberation from God but an ethic of the status quo where God's mandate to care for the poor and needy becomes ensnarled in the system of politics. There was no government welfare system in Israel, but by Constantine's fourth century rule, the lines of theology, ethics, and politics were blurred. Consequently, Cone says, "The ethics of the fourth century Father's differed fundamentally from biblical revelation." This, Cone says was the "essential error of the Early Church." "By becoming the religion of the Roman state, replacing the public sacrifices, Christianity became the opposite of what Jesus intended."[21]

Young adults who have aged out of foster care are counted among the poor and oppressed who have been failed by faith-based communities whose foundational theological principles have been influenced and often driven by social and political factors, leaving this vulnerable segment of society outside the covenant of community. James Cone sums it up this way:

> Theologians of the Christian church have not interpreted Christian ethics as an act for the liberation of the oppressed because their view of divine revelation were defined by philosophy and other cultural values rather than by the biblical theme of God as the liberator of the oppressed.[22]

Conclusion

The initial response for many congregations and faith-based organizations that engage in caring for orphans has been to build orphanages. Orphans do not have families or homes, right? We must revisit the biblical definition, which is consistent with that of

[20] James Cone, *God of the Oppressed* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 134.

[21] Cone, *God of the Oppressed*, 134.

[22] Cone, *God of the Oppressed*, 112.

UNICEF and other global organizations: An orphan is a child who has lost one or both parents. Many children in orphanages, however, do have a living parent and many others have extended family in their community.[23] Far too many of the residential care programs that Christians build have this unintended consequence.

As the implications were in Exodus 22:22-25, my contentions are that Charles F. Golden United Methodist Church (UMC) and many other faith-based entities are implicated as guilty of dereliction of God's concise and repeated call to defend and care for the fatherless by straying away from the covenantal responsibility to care for the poor and marginalized segment of society. While faith-based communities like Golden United Methodist Church may justifiably be commended for their contributions to the community; however, according to God's Word, has enough been done to care for orphans amongst us?

Christians caring for orphans has been a part of Christendom since the earliest days of the church and the government has played the justice role that God gave to it to protect children in severe neglect and abuse. The church can help to fulfill the relational void by reawakening its historical role and readjusting its theology of pastoral care by providing care for those that are in greatest need of liberation from poverty and hopelessness. The Faith Based community can no longer rely on bureaucratic governments in industrialized, technically advanced societies who engage in funding, to ensure the effectiveness of these programs. It is the mandate of faith-based organizations to actively engage in implementing pastoral care and counseling programs.

[23] A. Dunn and D. Webb, "A Last Resort: The Growing Concern about Children in Residential Care" (paper presented at the International Save the Children Alliance, Washington, D.C., 2003).

CHAPTER FIVE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The theoretical foundations reviews existing literature on volunteer motivation as well as natural mentoring and examine factors that motivate members of a faith-based organization to become mentors for aged out foster care youth and review existing literature on natural mentoring. It is interesting that mentors are motivated by the act of volunteering and the motivational theory plays a large role as to why individuals engage in the act of volunteering. When evaluating motivational theory, there are multiple models including unidimensional, two-dimensional, three-dimensional and multiple-dimensional. The multiple models of motivational theory are inter-related into Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow's theory states that the basic needs of people should be fulfilled in order to encourage or promote motivation. The basic needs of people as noted by Maslow are physiological, social, the need to belong and feel loved, the need to possess self-esteem and the need for self-actualization. All of these components make up the theoretical framework that explains the rationale of why individuals are willing to mentor aged out foster care youth. Furthermore, this theoretical framework should also serve as the necessary ingredients to encourage others to embrace the aged out youth.

Volunteer antecedents include functional motives, role identity, dispositional factors, situational circumstances, and organizational components.[1] According to the role identity theory, a person has multiple identities that are formed through interactions and expectations. When an individual identifies and internalizes the role of being a volunteer, he incorporates this role into a self-concept. The higher the degree of identification, and internalization the more likely an individual would continue to volunteer.[2] An organization's reputation, employee culture, and dispositional factors, such as personality traits, beliefs, and values, also influence an individual's decision to volunteer.[3] To ensure sufficient depth, this focuses only on one essential volunteer antecedent: an individual's functional motives. Of particular emphasis are the functional motivation theory and a multi-dimensional model of volunteer motivation, which will be used as foundations.[4]

Each year approximately 48,000 youth nationwide leave the foster care system, discharged to self, without basic tools, community connections, nor family support. Making it on your own is not easy, but children aging out of foster care, usually at age eighteen, have it especially tough.[5] They are more likely than their peers to have

[1] Marcia Finkelstein, "Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivational Orientations and the Volunteer Process," *Personality and Individual Differences* 46, no. 5-6 (2009): 653-658.

[2] Marcia Finkelstein, Louis Penner, and Michael Brannick, "Motive, Role Identity, and Prosocial Personality as Predictors of Volunteer Activity," *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal* 33, no. 4 (2005): 403-418.

[3] L. A. Penner, "Dispositional and Organizational Influences on Sustained Volunteerism: An Interactionist Perspective," *Journal of Social Issues* 58, no. 3 (2002): 447-467.

[4] E. Gil Clary, Mark Snyder, Robert D. Ridge, Peter Miene and Julie Haugen, "Matching Messages to Motives in Persuasion: A Functional Approach to Promoting Volunteerism," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 24, no. 13 (1994): 1129-1146.

[5] Martha Shirk and Gary Strangler, *On Their Own: What Happens to Kids When They Age Out of the Foster Care System?* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004), 2.

difficulty completing high school, face mental health, and substance abuse problems, therefore becoming involved with the juvenile justice system. These are among the first findings from the Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago's longitudinal study of youth aging out of foster care.

Permanent connections are an important support for youth as they transition out of foster care and mentoring is one strategy that can potentially lead to lasting, caring permanent connections. It has been shown to be effective in assisting youth in making a successful transition to adulthood. "Who are your mentors?" Actress, author, dancer, and foster care advocate, Victoria Rowell asked one young man during a visit to Starr Commonwealth. He responded by saying he did not have any, and the actress quickly refuted that claim. "Who gets on your nerves the most? Who is constantly bugging you about stuff? There's that one person who is always looking after you whether you realize it or not. Those people are your mentors."[6] Mentoring is highly valued by young people for helping them with relationship problems, building their confidence, and improving their emotional wellbeing. While the goal is always for youth to have reached permanency early in life, for some, this does not happen, and the mentoring relationship may be the gateway to those connections.

Research indicates that children in foster care tend to be more disengaged and exhibit more problem behaviors.[7] Children in foster care are also at a greater risk of

[6] Victoria Rowell, *The Women Who Raised Me: A Memoir* (New York: NY: Harper Collins, 2007), 56.

[7] Harry Daniels, Ted Cole, Edward Sellman, Jane Sutton, John Visser, and Julie Bedward, *Study of Young People Permanently Excluded from School* (Birmingham, UK: University of Birmingham School of Education, 2003), 17.

dropping out or being forced out of high school.[8] For the aforementioned reasons, it is imperative to determine if a faith-based organization can be motivated to become mentors to aged out foster care youth. Elementary definitions describe volunteers as those who help others with no expectation of monetary rewards and volunteerism as a type of activity that is intended to improve the wellbeing of others.[9]

Volunteerism typically involves ongoing and long-term behavior. For example, fifty percent of volunteers report volunteering on an ongoing rather than on a one-time basis.[10] Furthermore, longitudinal studies have found that once individuals begin to volunteer regularly, a majority of them continue to do so for at least a few years. This suggests that once individuals make a commitment to volunteer, they do so for a significant period of time even if volunteering imposes substantial time, sacrifices, and opportunity costs.

Planning suggests that volunteering is a planned rather than spontaneous action. Previous research suggests that prior to volunteering, individuals engage in considerable forethought, weighing its costs and benefits.[11] Davis et al. found that individuals were more likely to be willing to volunteer when they anticipated positive emotional responses and satisfaction from the activity.

[8] Daniels et.al., *Study of Young People*, 17.

[9] John C. Mowen and Harish Sujan, "Volunteer Behavior: A Hierarchical Model Approach for Investigating Its Trait and Functional Motive Antecedents," *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 15, no. 2 (2005): 170-182.

[10] Independent Sector, "Executive Summary," *Giving and Volunteering in the United States, 1999: Findings from a National Survey* (Washington, D.C.: Independent Sector, 1999).

[11] Mark H. Davis, Kyle Mitchell, Jennifer Hall, Jennifer Lothert, Tyra Snapp, and Marnee Meyer, "Empathy, Expectations, and Situational Preferences: Personality Influences on the Decision to Participate in Volunteer Helping Behaviors," *Journal of Personality* 67, no. 3 (1999): 469-503.

These findings support the idea that volunteerism is, to some degree, a planned action based on rational deliberation of the affect and satisfaction likely to be derived from it. In fact, when deciding whether to volunteer and the amount of involvement, individuals consider not only the costs and benefits associated with volunteerism, but also the extent to which volunteerism fits with their own personal needs. The rational decision-making process that precedes volunteerism, therefore, can be contrasted with the one typically preceding helping behavior in emergency situations.[12] Due to the nature of emergency situations, the decision to help is usually made almost instantaneously and without nearly as much conscious deliberation as the decision to volunteer.

Volunteerism excludes helping behavior directed at the care of friends, loved ones, and other intimates others.[13] Based on this definition, it can be deduced that recipients of volunteer actions are typically strangers. As such, the volunteer is not motivated to help by an obligation towards intimate others or prior experiences with the recipients, but by an inherent personal desire to help.[14] This type of helping behavior, often referred to as nonobligatory helping, is central to the definition of volunteerism.[15]

While there are individuals who engage in voluntary, ongoing, helping behavior towards strangers on their own, volunteerism generally occurs in some type of

[12] Davis et al., "Empathy, Expectations, and Situational Preferences," 469-503.

[13] Ami Rokach and Sonya Wanklyn, "Motivation to Volunteer: Helping Empower Sick Children," *Psychology and Education: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 46, no. 1 (2009): 7-25.

[14] Rokach and Wanklyn, "Motivation to Volunteer," 7-25.

[15] Allen Omoto and Mark Snyder, "Sustained Helping without Obligation: Motivation, Longevity of Service, and Perceived Attitude Change among AIDS Volunteers," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 68, no. 4 (1995): 671-686.

organizational context.[16] In fact, according to the independent sector, almost eighty-five percent of volunteers work in an organization.

Definition of Motivation

Motivation is a theoretical construct used to explain behavior. It represents the reasons for people's actions, desires, and needs. Motivation can also be defined as one's direction to behavior or what causes a person to want to repeat a behavior and vice versa.[17] A motive is what prompts the person to act in a certain way or at least develop an inclination for specific behavior.[18] For example, when someone eats food to satisfy the need of hunger, or when a student does his or her work in school because he or she wants a good grade. Both show a similar connection between what we do and why we do it. According to Maehr and Meyer, "Motivation is a word that is part of the popular culture as few other psychological concepts are."[19] One would have to have a motive (or motives) for doing something, even if such motives are complex and difficult to pinpoint. At the other end of the range of complexity, hunger is frequently the motive for seeking out and consuming food.

The functional motivation theory was derived from theories concerning attitude and persuasion. Central to the functional motivation theory are two tenets: individuals

[16] Omoto and Snyder, “Sustained Helping without Obligation,” 671-686.

[17] Andrew J. Elliot and Martin Covington, “Approach and Avoidance Motivation,” *Educational Psychology Review* 13 (2001): 2.

[18] Ronald L. Pardee, “Motivation Theories of Maslow, Herzberg, McGregor and McClelland: A Literature Review of Selected Theories Dealing with Job Satisfaction and Motivation,” February 1990, accessed February 3, 2012, http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED316767.pdf.

[19] Martin L. Maehr and Heather Mayer, “Understanding Motivation and Schooling: Where We’ve Been, Where We Are and Where We Need to Go,” *Educational Psychology Review* 9, no. 44 (1997).

engage in purposeful activities to fulfill a certain goal and individuals can perform the same activities to serve different psychological functions.[20] In other words, different volunteers may engage in volunteer service to fulfill distinct psychological functions or the same volunteers may engage in volunteer service to fulfill distinct psychological functions at different times in their lives. However, all volunteers engage in volunteerism because it fulfills certain psychological functions. The functional approach seeks to determine the reasons and goals that motivate volunteers, thus conceptualizing the volunteer decision in terms of personal motivations.[21]

According to the functional motivation theory, acts of volunteerism that appear identical may represent different underlying motives. These motives, in turn, may symbolize different psychological functions. The theory implies that individuals will begin and continue to volunteer as long as the activity matches and fulfills the individuals' motivational concerns.[22] Consequently, an organization can improve volunteer efforts by appealing to the psyche, which means, a psychological evaluation would have to be utilized.

Numerous models of motivation have been used to categorize and explain volunteer motivation. While some models are more widely used than others, all of them will be introduced. This section will outline several of such theories, beginning with

[20] E. G. Clary et al., "Matching Messages to Motives in Persuasion: A Functional Approach to Promoting Volunteerism," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 24, no. 13 (July 1994): 1129-1146.

[21] Mark Snyder, "Basic Research and Practical Problems: The Promise of a 'Functional' Personality And Social Psychology," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 19 (1993): 251-264.

[22] E. Gil Clary and Mark Snyder, "The Motivations to Volunteer: Theoretical and Practical Considerations," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 8, no. 5 (1999): 156-159.

unidimensional models, followed by two-dimensional models, three-dimensional models, and lastly, multi-dimensional models.

The unidimensional model of motivation suggests that there exists only one category of volunteer motivation. In other words, volunteer motives can be lumped together into one category. Cnaan and Goldberg identified twenty-eight different motives, such as religion, reputation, and passing time from existing literature and administered a survey to 285 volunteers from forty different non-profit organizations using these twenty-eight motives.[23] They found that these motives formed a unidimensional scale, implying that overlapping motives—motives that are both altruistic and egoistic, motivates volunteers. Thus, volunteers are motivated not by categories of motives but by one category, which consists of a combination of motives. Unfortunately, Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen's findings have not been sufficiently replicated and the unidimensional model of motivation remains one of the least utilized models.

Two-dimensional models, on the other hand, distinguish between two different categories of volunteer motives. Two possible categories are egoistic and altruistic motives.[24] Egoistic motives are related to the attainment of tangible rewards such as career-related benefits. Individuals motivated by egoistic motives engage in volunteer service for the amelioration of their own welfare. In contrast, individuals motivated by altruistic motives engage in volunteerism with the purpose of augmenting the welfare of others. Two other possible categories are extrinsic and intrinsic motives. Intrinsically

[23] Ram Cnaan and Robin S. Goldberg-Glen, "Measuring Motivation to Volunteer in Human Services," *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 27, no. 3 (1991): 269-284.

[24] Michael B. Frisch and Meg Gerrard, "Natural Helping Systems: A Survey of Red Cross Volunteers," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 9, no. 5 (1981): 567-579.

motivated behaviors are inherently satisfying and the individual engages in the activity because of the inherent satisfaction.[25] Activities that are extrinsically motivated, however, are performed because of the external outcome that it yields.

In three-dimensional models, motivations are divided into altruistic motives, material motives, and social motives. While researchers have debated over the specific labels attached to these categories, they have largely agreed on the existence of three categories and the contents of these categories as explanations for volunteer motivation. Altruistic motives emphasize the importance of concern for others while material motives are derived from the desire for material rewards.[26] Social motives, on the other hand, appeal to social interactions as motivating factors.

Multi-dimensional models posit the existence of multiple categories of motives. One such model was put forth by Clary et al., which assumes the truth of the functional motivation theory and identifies six distinct motivational factors.[27] Their model best conceptualizes the intricate set of motives underlying volunteer motivation and has become one of the most widely accepted models in the field. Since the development of Clary et al.'s model, numerous other researchers have also assumed the truth of the functional motivation theory and built upon their model.[28]

[25] Marcia Finkelstein, "Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivational Orientations and the Volunteer Process," *Personality and Individual Differences* 46, no. 5-6 (2009): 653-658.

[26] Manjit Monga, "Measuring Motivation for Volunteers for Special Events," *Event Management* 10, no. 1 (2006): 47-61.

[27] E. Gil Clary et al., "Understanding and Assessing the Motivations of Volunteers: A Functional Approach," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 74, no. 6 (1998): 1516-1530.

[28] Clary et al., "Understanding and Assessing," 1516-1530.

Theories of Motivation

Motivation is the force that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors. It is what causes us to take action, whether to grab a snack to reduce hunger or enroll in college to earn a degree. The forces that lie beneath motivation can be biological, social, emotional, or cognitive in nature.

Researchers have developed a number of different theories to explain motivation. Each individual theory tends to be rather limited in scope. However, by looking at the key ideas behind each theory, you can gain a better understanding of motivation as a whole.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow has developed one of the most well known theories regarding motivation in humans. His theory builds upon the fact that the basic needs of people need to be fulfilled in order for people to be motivated. These basic needs are the physiological needs, the social needs, the need to belong and feel love, self-esteem, and finally self-actualization. Maslow argues that all these needs have to be fulfilled; starting from the basic psychological needs and moving upwards in the hierarchy in order to finally reach self-actualization.[29] As he further explains, these aspects are steps that every human needs to fulfill in order to gain their self-esteem and finally self-actualization.

These steps are further explained by Aasted Halse such as the physiological needs includes basic human needs of maintenance and defending the organism, which are needs

[29] Abraham Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review* 50 (1943): 370-396.

that are basic conditions for the preservation of life such as: hunger, thirst, and safety.[30] Social needs means feeling accepted, friendship, having status and contact with others and the need to belong to a social setting. The need to belong and feel love can be described as the answers to the questions: Who am I, What do I know, and How do I function together with others? This also includes being able to function in a social setting and being able to perform. And finally the need of self-actualization means a need of expressing yourself and be creative, develop as a person in the shape of knowledge, problem solving and exploring and to use and express your abilities.

Aasted Halse discuss Maslow's theory and concludes that according to Maslow all the needs one have are basic needs, which means that they are both inherited and species specific and also that the satisfaction of all these needs is a condition of the development of the so called "complete human."[31] Looking at Maslow's basic needs there are certain needs that are more or less apparent in different social settings. The basic physiological needs will be more dominant in less developed countries where people do not have enough food while the need for self-actualization is more dominant in societies like our where we often have our most basic needs met such as food and a roof over our head. Moreover, according to Halse, motivation is the psychological foundation to why we act the way that we do, therefore motivational theories can help us in understanding and explain the human behavior.[32] In Maslow's theory the concepts of needs and motif are the central ideas. The link between the two is, according to Maslow, that the actual

[30] John Aasted Halse, "Humanistisk Psykologi: Maslow, Glasser och Frankl," in *Utvecklingspsykologiska Teorier - En Introduktion*, ed. E. Jerlang (Stockholm, Sweden: Liber, 2008), 272-297.

[31] Halse, "Humanistisk Psykologi," 278.

[32] Halse, "Humanistisk Psykologi," 278.

need within an individual is what drives them—motivates them to a particular action. Furthermore, Wendy Bloisi and others in *Management and Organisational Behaviour,* discuss the limitations of Maslow's hierarchy of needs model and the fact that the implementation of the model within the industrial sector have been mixed. The failure occurs in the locksteps of the five steps in the hierarchy where the lower step must be fulfilled before moving on to the higher needs.[33]

The reason to why this theory is included is because it is important to grasp what underlying basic needs people have and how significant it is to actually make sure that these are fulfilled. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a well-known theory that can be connected in a broad field of study.

Work Motivation Theories

Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory, also called motivator-hygiene theory, builds upon the hypothesis that the factors causing job satisfaction are different from those causing job dissatisfaction. If these factors are separate Herzberg concludes that the two different feelings are not the opposite of each other and that therefore job satisfaction is made up of two unipolar traits.[34] This theory was created by an examination of events in the lives of engineers and accountants. Since then there have been several other investigations that have complemented the original research and made it one of the most replicated studies within the field of job attitudes.[35] In this study there are two different

[33] Wendy Bloisi, Curtis Cook, and Philip Hunsaker, *Management and Organisational Behaviour,* 2nd ed. (Berkshire, UK: McGraw-Hill Education, 2007): 198.

[34] Frederick Herzberg, "One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?," *Harvard Business Review* (September-October 1987): 9.

[35] Herzberg, "One More Time," 8.

human needs involved, one being the inner drive to avoid pain from the environment and the other being related to the unique characteristics of humans being the ability to experience psychological growth.[36]

Moreover, Bloisi and others discuss the two-factor theory in that Herzberg has his focus on work-related needs and the theory assumes that for volunteers to be motivated, the content of the job they perform have to be motivating.[37] If faith based organizations were to only improve the working conditions this will not necessarily energize the volunteer's behavior. The hygiene factors in this model consist of the basic aspects that surround the job such as job security, working conditions and relationships among volunteers. The motivator factors, on the other hand, contain intrinsic job achievement and responsibilities.[38] The theory is mainly focused on results and efficiency and therefore not directly applicable to faith based organizations, which does not focus entirely on results within it. However, with FBO this might be connected with the reason why people do voluntary work, which often is because they believe the work the FBO does is important and rewarding. Herzberg argues that the most appropriate way to increase motivation factors is to work towards enrich jobs, which involves giving the job more meaning in the form of for example variety, responsibility and increasing the challenges for individuals.[39]

[36] Herzberg, "One More Time," 9.

[37] Bloisi, Cook, and Hunsaker, *Management and Organizational Behavior Management,* 202.

[38] Bloisi, Cook, and Hunsaker, *Management and Organizational Behavior Management,* 203.

[39] Bloisi, Cook, and Hunsaker, *Management and Organizational Behavior Management,* 204.

Expectancy Theory

The expectancy theory of motivation was developed by Vroom and tries to explain, contrasting to need theories of motivation such as Maslow, what motivates people in the workplace. Expectancy theory is based on the idea that "people believe there are relationships between the effort they make at work, the performance they achieve from that effort, and the rewards they receive from their effort and performance."[40]

The probabilities:

- expectancy involves what a person thinks that the work effort will affect the performance of outcome of the task
- instrumentality deals with how the person predicts that a certain level of performance will bring personal consequences
- valence concerns the value an individual put on the personal consequences that arise from the work performance, which could be negative or positive.[41]

For example: A volunteer that expects that his or her effort could lead to improvements of another person's life and this could be done by collecting money downtown a Friday afternoon. The result of this performance would give the person a sense of meaningfulness satisfaction since that person's effort was worthwhile the result of the contribution for improving the conditions for another person.

The expectancy theory identifies that an individual's goals may not always be in line with the goals of a FBO but they can be harmonized. Michael Armstrong furthers

[40] Jennie Rosén and Maria Reinklou, "Motivating and Retaining Volunteers in Non-Profit Organizations: A Qualitative Study within the Field of Management, Striving for Improvements" (independent thesis, advanced level, Umeå School of Business and Economics, 2013), 22.

[41] Fred Lunenburg, "Expectancy Theory of Motivation: Motivating by Altering Expectations," *International Journal of Management, Business, and Administration,* 15, no. 1 (2007): 1.

makes the claim that the expectancy theory is a process theory, he also summarizes the theory by contending that if people know what they need to do in order to receive a reward (and understand the task), then the reward will be considered which makes their motivation high.[42]

This theory proves the importance of being clear about the goals and clear about the difference a volunteer make can by participating and putting forth effort. When providing the volunteers with clear guidelines the volunteers can aim their energy at doing things that will directly contribute and help the organization to reach it's goals.

Job Characteristic Theory

Developed by J. Richard Hackman and Greg Oldman, theorized that by evaluating conditions that lead to high performance and satisfaction at work. Later the authors examine how these conditions can be achieved. Hackman and Oldman state that the reason why people perform well at their work is because it is rewarding and satisfying to do so, which the authors would like to call internal motivation and does not involve bribes or tangible rewards.[43]

The authors articulated three suggestions of what creates conditions for internal motivation namely; knowledge of the results, experience responsibility and experience the work as meaningful. These three factors together are labeled "Critical Psychological

[42] Michael Armstrong, *Armstrong's Handbook of Reward Management Practice: Improving Performance Through Reward*, 3rd ed. (London, UK: Kogan Page, 2010), 21.

[43] J. Richard Hackman and Greg Oldman, *Work Redesign* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley 1980), 81.

States" and are necessary to create a strong internal work motivation.[44] To one and each of these factors there are core job characteristics that contribute to each critical psychological state. First, there are skill variety, task identity and task significance that contributes to the passion of the work; secondly, autonomy contributes to experienced responsibility for outcomes of the work and thirdly, feedback from job contributes to knowledge of the actual results of the work activities. By adding up the core job characteristics one receives a "Motivating Potential Score" (MPS). Consequently, there are three factors that the authors suggest that one should take into account for this model that will help to analyze who will and who will not respond positively to a job with high MPS and these factors are called moderators. Hackman and Oldman mention that there are a lot of factors that could be considered, however, there are three that are of high importance in this subject and they are: knowledge and skills; growth, need, strength and context satisfactions. Altogether the core job characteristics, the moderators, and the critical psychological states fosters high internal work motivation, high growth satisfaction, high general job satisfaction, and high work effectiveness.

Richard Saavedra and Seog Kwun conducted a research by investigating if the job characteristics theory is related to affect, which is a consequence of an affective job experience.[45] Their research was conducted quantitatively and investigated positive and negative relations. The authors found that the characteristics that are related to the motivating the job potential are also related to the affective experience at work. The groupings were as follows:

[44] Hackman and Greg Oldman, *Work Redesign*, 73.

[45] Richard Saavedra and Seog Kwun, "Affective States in Job Characteristics Theory," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 21 (2000): 132-144.

a) Both task identity and feedback were negatively related to unpleasant affect

b) Task significance and autonomy showed a positive relation to activated pleasant affect

c) Skill variety has a positive relation to activated unpleasant affect

In conclusion workers are stressed if the job requires a number of different skills, not stressed if their task includes a piece of work that can be completed and they receive feedback for that task. In fact, they should be enthusiastic when their job includes making decisions, affecting others lives and when receiving feedback for the work that has been carried out.

Since the volunteers do not receive monetary rewards for the work that they are carrying out for the FBO it is crucial that they have a strong internal motivation and even though they have it internal by nature, FBO can make an effort by attempting to enhance and encourage these core job characteristics, the critical psychological states and the outcomes.

Goal Setting Theory

Armstrong discusses this theory and talks about motivation and the importance of specific goals that are difficult but achievable and also that it is significant with feedback on performance.[46] The goal setting theory was developed by Edwin Locke in the mid 1960's and applies to human motivation and it aims at trying to explain why some people may perform their tasks better than others. The research was conducted in laboratory settings and the findings were as follows:

1) The more difficult the goal the greater the achievement

[46] Armstrong, *Armstrong's Handbook of Reward Management Practice,* 2.

2) The more specific or explicit the goal, the more precisely the performance is regulated

3) Goals that are both difficult and specific lead to the highest point

4) Commitment to goals is most critical when goals are specific and difficult

5) High commitment to goals is attained when:

    a. The individual is convinced that the goal is important

    b. The individual is convinced that the goal is attainable (or that at least progress can be made toward it)[47]

Additionally, Locke contends that goal-setting is most effective when there is feedback showing the progress in relation to the goal and goal-setting together with self-efficacy mediates the knowledge of past performance on subsequent performance. Goals affect performance by affecting the direction of action, the degree of the effort exerted, and the persistence of action over time and in addition goals stimulate planning in general. When people strive for goals on complex tasks, they are least effective in discovering suitable task strategies if, they have no prior experience and there is high pressure on performance or time pressure. Goals, commitment, and self-efficacy mediate the effect of numerous personal traits and incentives on performance. Goal-setting mechanism can either be trained or adopted for the purpose of self-regulation and lastly, goals lead to self-satisfaction and harder goals that requires higher accomplishments in order to attain self-satisfaction rather than easy goals. As can be seen this goal-setting theory deals with a number of conscious motivational factors that are fundamental even though it leaves out the subconscious factors.[48]

[47] Edwin A. Locke, "Motivation Through Conscious Goal Setting," *Applied and Preventive Psychology* 5 (1996): 117-124.

[48] Locke, "Motivation Through Conscious Goal Setting," 117-124.

It may be somewhat sensitive with discussing performance and efficiency when talking about volunteers since that is what they are…freewill, and therefore managers cannot put pressure on them because the pressure may lead to them aborting their mission. A commonality that some people choose to get involved with FBO is because they want to satisfy intangible things such as feelings. Furthermore, in order for volunteers to experience those feelings, the management can apply the goal setting theory and utilize them as guidelines to help volunteers reach goals create satisfaction among the volunteers within the organization.

Motivational Work in Faith Base Organizations

Laura Phillips and Mike Phillips conclude from their research completed as a case study on a big organization regarding volunteers attitudes, that the different incentives for doing volunteer work is as many as the volunteers they had been studying.[49] However, there were some common themes that arose in the study. Few or none had tangible rewards as the reason for their work. It was even concluded that some might be less likely to engage their time to volunteer if they were compensated in money or other tangible means. They further their findings by suggesting FBO managers may benefit from offering a variety of rewards to fulfill the volunteers wants.

In addition, Phillip and Phillip acknowledge that most managers in FBO strive to motivate their volunteers by offering extrinsic and tangible motivation in the form of gifts. However, this behavior might be a waste of time since the volunteers would

[49] Laura Phillips and Mike Phillips, "Volunteer Motivation and Reward Preference: An Empirical Study of Volunteerism in a Large, Not-for-profit Organization," *SAM Advanced Management Journal* 75, no. 4 (Autumn 2010): 12-19.

actually produce better results if the managers would concentrate on providing and improving intangible rewards instead.[50] Even though the organization do not have anything more to offer, reminding the volunteers of what intangible rewards they are receiving from the tasks that they are performing will help the volunteers to become more motivated. The authors conclude by saying that organizations benefit from providing almost any reward to their volunteers since the action will communicate a symbolic message that the organization values them.[51] Likewise, a study implemented in 2008 by Galit Yanay and Niza Yanay suggested that volunteering is an activity that enhances one's pleasure, life satisfaction and well being and that it is not unreasonable to believe that those who volunteer feel that their actions will contribute to a positive self-image and positive feelings.[52]

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Bloisi and others implies that there are two basic types of rewards:

- Extrinsic - consist of promotion or pay raise
- Intrinsic - concern people's personal feelings and the satisfaction of performing a task rewards [53]

However, Steven Reiss states that extrinsic motivation is usually called Hull's drives since the Hull-Spence drives includes factors such as hunger, thirst and pain avoidance,[54]

[50] Phillips and Phillips, "Volunteer Motivation and Reward Preference," 18.

[51] Phillips and Phillips, "Volunteer Motivation and Reward Preference," 18.

[52] Galit Yanay-Ventura and Niza Yanay, "The Decline of Motivation? From Communication to Dropping out of Volunteering," *Nonprofit Management and Leadership* 19, no. 1 (2008): 65.

[53] Bloisi, Cook, and Hunsaker, *Management and Organizational Behavior Management,* 215.

[54] Steve Reiss, "Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation," *Teaching of Psychology* 39, no. 2 (2012): 154.

which also can be related to Herzberg's two-factor theory.[55] Intrinsic motivation on the other hand concerns non-survival needs like curiosity and competence that can be categorized as ego-motives.

Edward Deci further explains intrinsically motivated activities, as "ones for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself."[56] Intrinsic motivation can also be described as what concerns the feeling of accomplishment and doing something that is beneficial for the public interest.[57] Intrinsic motivation could be seen as an additional source of reinforcement that would motivate a specific behavior either in the absence of or in addition to the motivation that comes from satisfying biological or to receive extrinsic rewards.[58]

According to Deci the question of "Why?" is within the field of motivation and, psychologists have been discussing the matter and there are theories that concern that people either decide what to do, as well as that it is the inner force, or emotions of a human that drives people to their actions. The cognitive approach of motivation concerns mainly the thought process of a person. The approach deals with the fact that people decide what to do based on the outcome of their actions.[59] There are two ways of intrinsic motivation, the first way concerns stimulation and if there is no stimulation people will seek it, and the second way regards conquering challenges in order to feel completion.

[55] Herzberg, "One More Time," 9.

[56] Edward L. Deci, *Intrinsic Motivation* (New York, NY: Plenum Press, 1975), 23.

[57] Sung Min Park and Jessica Word, "Driven to Service: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation for Public and Nonprofit Managers," *Public Personnel Management* 41, no. 4 (2012): 707.

[58] Carol Sansone and Judith Harackiewicz, ed., "Looking beyond Rewards: The Problem and Promise of Intrinsic Motivation," in *Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation: The Search for Optimal Motivation and Performance* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 2000), 2.

[59] Deci, *Intrinsic Motivation*, 15.

Consequently, what drives people to accomplish tasks is according to obtain a feeling of self-determining accomplishment of completing assignments and achieving goals. People that are driven by intrinsic motivation view the activities as ends in themselves rather than means to an end, and they complete them only for their own sake and not because they lead to any extrinsic rewards.[60]

Conclusion

Mentoring programs are challenged to find sufficient numbers of committed and skilled mentors. Because some programs work to recruit a quantity of individuals rather than seeking quality volunteers, mentors with unfilled expectations leave because the act of volunteering or the task to volunteer does not provide them satisfaction. This theoretical foundation sought to investigate volunteer motivations and motivational orientations with a particular focus on the functional motivation theory.

Volunteers are an important resource for many FBO that create programs to address needs within communities.[61] A review of this theoretical foundation seems to indicate certain implications for recruiting and retaining volunteers.

Using Clary and other model of six functional motives, a substantial body of research has shown that volunteers are primarily motivated by the desire to help those

[60] Deci, *Intrinsic Motivation*, 23.

[61] Karen Papadakis, Tonya Griffin, and Joel Frater, "Understanding Volunteers' Motivations," in *Proceeding of the 2004 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium* (2004): 326, accessed April 29, 2015, http://www.fs.fed.us/ne/newtown_square/publications/technical_reports/pdfs/2005/326papers/papadakis326.Pdf.

less fortunate than themselves and to express altruistic values.[62] Although there are differences in functional motives among different volunteers, the values function as the most salient motivating factor.[63]

The most ideal situation would permit volunteer recruiters to administer the VFI to potential volunteers to assess their functional motives, thus allowing the tailor recruitment messages to fit each individual. However, due to resource and time constraints, a more general approach needs to be implemented. According to existing research, the most beneficial strategy would be to create recruitment messages that emphasize the values, understanding, and enhancement functions.

Furthermore, research suggests that individuals continue to volunteer to extend the activity fulfills the individuals' functional motives.[64] Taking this into consideration; organizations would be wise to match their volunteers functional motives to the activities that they are asked to perform. In order to do so, organizations may administer the VFI to their existing volunteer work force every few months and matching the most salient motives to the type of work each individual does. For example, volunteers who indicate that their primary motivator is the social function should be assigned tasks that involve interacting with people instead of administrative work.

[62] Lora Allison, Morris A. Okun, and Kathy Dutridge, "Assessing Volunteer Motives: A Comparison of an Open-Ended Probe and Likert-Rating Scales," *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 12 (2002): 243-255.

[63] Sally Planalp and Melanie Trost, "Motivations of Hospice Volunteers," *American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine* 26, no. 3 (2009): 188-192.

[64] Marcia Finkelstein, "Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivational Orientations and the Volunteer Process," *Personality and Individual Difference* 46, no. 5-6 (2009): 655.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

It is a fact that the success of a foster care youth transitions into adulthood is daunting and paralelled to their counterparts, they are doomed for destruction without any help---without a safety net. However, it has been proven that an ongoing relationship with a mentor can help reduce the ultimate doom. The focused and sustained attention of a healthy, positive adult role model who is committed to guiding them along the way, plays a crucial role in providing the skills and emotional stability that foster youth need. That constant unwavering support serves as a source of encouragement and empowerment by equipping them for a more healthier and positive future.

This research was implemented as a contribution toward identifying ways to inspire and support members of a Faith Based Organization who are willing to become mentors for foster care youth. An effective mentor is able to provide time to foster a relationship and fulfill the role of a consistent and permanent connection in the youths' lives.

Mentors play several important roles in the lives of foster youth. The three core dimensions of mentoring are: experience, guidance and a supportive relationship between

the mentor and the mentee.[1] According to Collins et al. "Mentoring, if done well, may hold the potential to meet some of the critical needs of youths transitioning from foster care to independent living and early adulthood."[2]

Methodology

This research project emerged as a partnership between the Charles F. Golden Memorial United Methodist Church and Refuge Community Development Corporation's Second Chapter (hereinafter known as Second Chapter). Second Chapter is an Independent Living Services (ILS) program contracted by Georgia Department of Human Services as a Service Provider for the Aged Out Foster Care Youth. Second Chapter provides housing, emotional support, therapy, independent living skills training and a monthly stipend. Second Chapter's goal in this process is to identify and expound on the motivations and experiences of the adult volunteers who did not want to become mentors. By investigating this factor, it will assist in developing a better understanding of how to further encourage and support mentors once the mentoring program is initiated and thereby provide the information necessary for Second Chapter to design programs that will accomplish those goals. This study used a non-statistical method utilizing qualitative questionnaires (both pre and post), teaching and focused group discussions. The overall choice of a qualitative approach was based on an interest to understand the inside perspectives of the soon to be mentors.

[1] Michelle R. Munson and J. Curtis McMillen, "Nonkin Natural Mentors in the Lives of Older Youth in the Foster Care," *Journal of Behavioral Health Services and Research* 35, no. 4 (December 2008): 458.

[2] M. E. Collins, R. R. Spencer, and R. Ward, "Supporting Youth in the Transition from Foster Care: Formal and Informal Connections," *Child Welfare* 89, no. 2 (2010): 132.

Admittedly, the initial research was to analyze data gathered after the implementation of a mentoring project for the aged out foster care youth. However, after a soft poll, the research was adjusted from a mentoring model for the youth to a motivating model for the members of Charles F. Golden United Methodist Church to become mentor for the emancipated youth. A memorandum of understanding was established to ensure the study was administered as agreed upon by both parties.

Description of Site

Charles F. Golden United Methodist Church is a thousand member church with 99% of African American and 1% of whites. The members are very supporting and loving. Rev. Dr. Williams has been serving as pastor of the church for eight years and the church has grown from fifty members to over a thousand. The church has grown to the point that there has to be three worship services on Sunday in order to accommodate everyone. The pastor has a heart for God and God's people. Fostering a partnership with Second Chapter, Dr. Williams and the congregants have agreed to yield themselves to being carefully crafted to assume the role of mentor for the aged out foster care youth of Second Chapter. This research should prove to be particularly helpful for those services, given the key role that mentors play in the transition process.

Sample and Population

The target population for the research composed of members from CFGMUMC. A self-created fillable questionnaire (Pre-Test) was emailed to fifty members between the target ages of thirty-two to sixty (according to church records). Having considered that all

where not going to do the survey, the targeted goal was ten. Eight of the pre-test emailed out were not returned; fifteen of the emails bounced back and because of the targeted age, one was eliminated leaving a total of twenty-six volunteers that participated in the survey. Of the twenty-six members polled, ten members indicated that they were not interested in becoming mentors.

All questions (except the questions determining the demographics) were closed-end likert questions (from like to dislike) that showed how strongly the respondents agree to a particular statement, which allowed the assessment to demonstrate the feeling towards a certain issue. The closed-end questions allowed the respondents to focus their attention on specific responses chosen by the investigator. Whereas an open-ended task allows for the respondents to write down what is readily available in their minds, which leaves the researcher in having to interpret their responses. Although a survey was emailed, the researcher gave a deadline of two weeks to allow sufficient time for completion. All information used in this analysis was derived from self-reported data.

Research Question

With a set goal in mind, one question was formed. Can biblical teaching motivate and encourage adults of a faith-based organization to become mentors for the aged out foster care youth?

Implementation

The initial survey was to serve as the self-assessment for the respondents and was designed to gather the demographic information first. Secondly, it was designed to determine their spirituality and their beliefs in the Bible. Thirdly, it was designed to determine if any were knowledgeable of the foster care process and lastly, determine the attitude towards becoming a mentor for the aged out foster care youth. The self-assessment was provided without any nature of the study revealed or the possibility of the implementation of a new ministry that will target those that God says we should look after.

Demographic Data

This section provides a profile of the study respondents. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the following: gender, age group, ethnicity, education and income. A target population for the research was composed of twenty-nine church members between the ages of thirty-two to sixty that live in the surrounding area of Metropolitan Atlanta.

Figure 1. Demographic profile of study respondents (n=3.70)

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	8	29.6
Female	19	70.3
Age Group		
18-26	1	3.70
27-35	9	33.3
36-39	7	25.9
40-49	6	22.2
50-65	4	14.8
Ethnicity		
African American	26	96.2
White	1	3.70
Education		
GED	1	3.7
High School	3	11.1
Some College	8	26.6
Graduated College	4	14.8
Masters Degree	5	18.5
Professional Degree	6	22.20

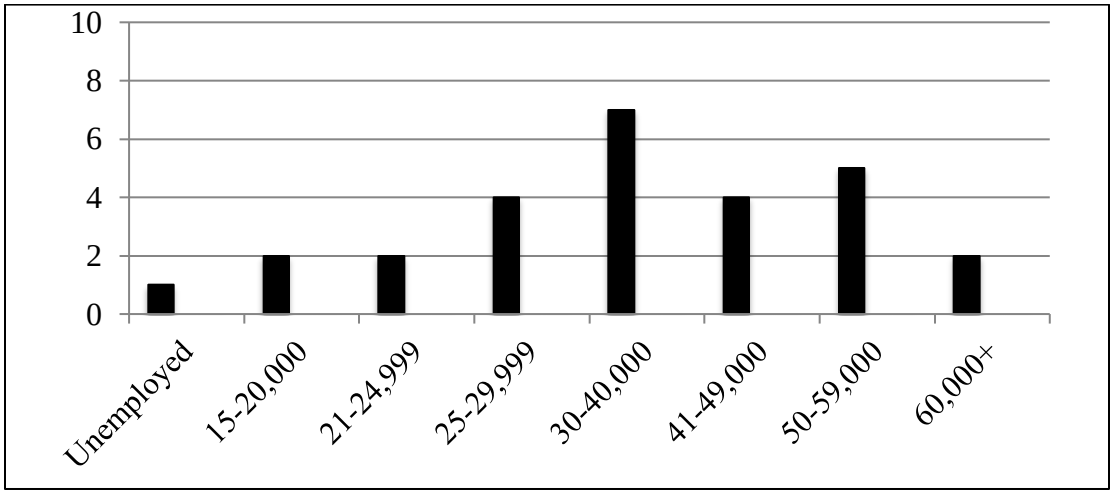
Figure 1. List the demographics of the twenty-seven respondents of the study. The majority of the respondents (97.5%) identified their ethnicity as African American, while (3.5%) specified white. The respondents reported no other ethnicities. The gender composition was 29.6% male and 70.3% female. The age composition was 3.70% for eighteen to twenty-six year olds, 33.3% for twenty-seven to thirty-five year olds, 25.9%

for the thirty-six to thirty-nine year olds, 22.2% for the forty to forty-nine year olds and 14.8% for the fifty to sixty-five year olds.

For the education composition, 3.7% had attained a GED, while 11.1% graduated from high school, 26.6% specified some college, 14.8% graduated college, 18.5% attained a Masters degree and 22.20% has a professional degree

Also, the target audience was specified to be between the ages of thirty-two to sixty, two of the respondents could not partake in the focus group because they were younger than thirty-two years of age, which drops the total number of participants down to twenty-six. In order to participate in the study, all respondents had to be willing to voluntarily complete the survey and they had an option of declining to be a part at any time.

Figure 2. Income levels of respondents



The majority of the respondents are currently employed and only 1 (3.70) that is not. 7.4% of the respondents reported income between 15,000-20,000. 7.4% reported income between 21,000-24,999. 14.8% reported income of 25,000-29,999. 25.9% reported income between 30,000-40,000. 18.5% reported income between 50,000-

59,000. Seven point four percent reported income of 60,000 and above. Although personal funding is not a factor for the aged out foster care because their food, shelter and clothing is provided for by DHS, as well as, in order for the youth to participate in an ILP, the youth must work or be in school full-time and or part-time. It does serve as a factor in the character analyzation.

Presentation of Findings

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the study in order to describe and explain the factors necessary to successfully identify the respondents that need to be motivate in playing a pivotal role in the aged out foster care youths. Utilizing the likert questionnaire where 1 = Strongly disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree. To report a true finding, the number of respondents is now 26(n=3.84) as oppose to the number of respondents reported in the demographics, which was twenty-seven.

Figure 3. Respondents who accept Jesus Christ as Savior

Value	Frequency	Percent
Agree	13	49.92%
Strongly Agree	13	49.92%

As shown in Figure three and it comes as no surprise that a Christian faith based organization would indicate at a high percentage rate that of the twenty-sox respondents that were polled, 49.92% (13) strongly agree that they have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior and equally, 49.92% (13) agree as well.

Figure 4. Respondents who exemplify God daily

Value	Frequency	Percent
Agree	0	0%
Strongly Agree	26	100%

As shown in figure four, of the twenty-six respondents, all twenty-six agreed at 100% that they try daily to exemplify God in their lifestyle.

Figure 5. Respondents who believe that the Bible is a guide for Christian living

Value	Frequency	Percent
Agree	0	0%
Strongly Agree	26	100%

As shown in figure five, of the twenty-six respondents, 100% indicated that they strongly agree that the Bible is their guide for Christian living.

Figure 6. Respondents who believe that God is concerned with everyone, including the poor

Value	Frequency	Percent
Agree	0	0%
Strongly Agree	26	100%

As shown in figure six, all twenty-six respondents believed that God is concerned about everyone, including the poor. Questions two through four were posed to determine where the respondents' faith lies and their spiritual maturity as a disciple of Christ. And for the most part, 100% strongly agreed that they try to exemplify God in their everyday walk and their belief that the Bible is the inerrant word of God. This give insight because

if a person really believe God's word, it is inevitable that they will grasp the Bible many accounts of taking care of the fatherless.

Figure 7. Respondents who are aware of what the Bible says about widows and the fatherless

Value	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	3	11.52%
Neutral	9	34.56%
Agree	2	7.68%
Strongly Agree	12	46.32%

As shown in figure seven, of the twenty-six respondents, 11.52% indicated that they disagreed with knowing what the Bible say about the widow and the fatherless, while 34.56% was not sure or did not want to indicate that they do not know what the Bible stated about the widow and the fatherless, 7.68% agreed that they did know what the Bible says about the widow and the fatherless, while 46.32% strongly agreed that they knew what the Bible says about the widow and the fatherless. Question number six, is paramount for this project because in direct correlation with question number eight and eleven will determine which respondents will become participants of the focus group for this project.

Figure 8. Respondents who understand how the Foster Care System works

Value	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	24	92.16%
Strongly agree	2	7.68%

As shown in figure eight, of the twenty-six respondents, 92.1% indicated that they was not aware of how the Foster Care system works while there were two respondents

who were or is presently a Department of Human Services Case Managers and at 7.68%, they had knowledge or strongly agreed that they do in fact understand how the Foster Care System.

Figure 9. Respondents who are knowledgeable about the Aged-Out Foster Care

Value	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	24	92.16%
Strongly agree	2	7.68%

As shown in figure nine, and like figure eight, the two who either work for or has in the past worked for the Department of Human Services at 7.68%. Of the remaining twenty-four respondents, indicate that they 92.16% disagree with having knowledge of the aged out foster care. Questions number seven and eight indicates that there is a need to open up a dialogue regarding the Foster Care system and specifically the Aged-Out Foster Care Youth.

Figure 10. Respondents who would consider being a mentor to a Foster Care Youth

Value	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	8	30.72%
Disagree	2	7.68%
Neutral	4	15.36%
Agree	5	19.2%
Strongly	7	26.88%

As shown in figure ten, of the twenty-six respondents, 30.72 % strongly disagreed that they would be a mentor, 7.68% disagreed that they would consider being a mentor for a Foster Care Youth, 15.36% were neutral, 19.2% agreed that they would consider being a mentor for a Foster Care Youth, and 26.88% strongly indicated that they would

consider being a mentor. The answer to this question has served as the focal point for the focus group that will prove the hypothetical question. With ten (38%) respondents, 30.74% stating that they strongly disagree with considering being a mentor to a Foster Care Youth as well as 7.68% stating the same serves as the nucleus of this project.

Figure 11. Respondents experienced in raising a child between 18-21 years of age

Value	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	4	15.36%
Strongly agree	20	76.8

As shown above in figure eleven, of the twenty-six respondents, 76.8% has indicated that they have raised child (ren) between the ages of eighteen to twenty-one, while 15.36% has not. Question number nine reveals who has and has not had the responsibility of raising an eighteen year olds. It also indicates their understanding and willingness to explore the possibility of mentoring.

Figure 12. Respondents who believe involvement with a youth would change their life

Value	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	3.84%
Disagree	4	15.36%
Neutral	3	11.52%
Agree	5	19.2%
Strongly Agree	13	49.92%

As shown in figure twelve, of the twenty-six respondents, 3.84% strongly disagreed that their involvement with a youth would change their life, 15.36% disagree that their involvement with a youth would change their life, 11.52% was neutral in the

thought, 19.2% agreed that their involvement would change a youth life and 49.92% strongly agreed that their involvement with a youth would change their life. Question number eleven, because of the project focus, the determinant factor in choosing the participants of the focus group includes the respondents that answered that their involvement with a youth will change their life. Of the 3.84% that strongly disagreed with their involvement and the 15.3% that disagreed, will be invited to an interview to determine the reasons of for their response.

Figure 13. Respondents who believe they would make a good mentor

Value	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	7.68%
Disagree	7	26.88%
Neutral	2	7.68%
Agree	9	34.56%
Strongly Agree	6	23.04%

As shown in figure thirteen, of the twenty-six respondents, 7.68% strongly disagreed that they would make a good mentor, 26.88% disagreed that they would make a good mentor and 7.68% was neutral in indicating that they would make a good mentor. Thirty-four point fifty-six percent agreed that they would make a good mentor, while 23.04% strongly agreed that they would make a good mentor. Question number twelve will serve as the co-focus point for the focus group. The project will determine if 42.24% (nearly half of the respondents) will be encouraged, empowered, educated and equipped to become mentors for the aged out foster care.

Figure 14. Respondents who know what mentoring entails

Value	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	7.68%
Disagree	3	11.52%
Neutral	3	11.52%
Agree	1	3.84%
Strongly Agree	17	65.28%

As shown in figure fourteen, seventeen of the twenty-six respondents strongly agreed that they know mentoring entails, 3.84% agreed that they know what mentoring entails, 11.52% don't know one way or the other, 11.52% indicated that they disagreed and 7.68% strongly disagreed.

Figure 15. Respondents who give wise counseling to others

Value	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	3.84%
Disagree	2	7.68%
Neutral	3	11.52%
Agree	4	15.36%
Strongly Agree	14	53.76%

As shown in figure fifteen, of the twenty-six respondents, 3.84% strongly disagreed of giving wise counseling, 7.68% disagreed of giving wise counseling, 11.52% are neutral in giving wise counseling, 15.36% agreed of giving wise counseling and 53.76% strongly agreed that they give wise counseling. Question thirteen and interesting enough, the same respondents that indicated that in question number eleven that they would not make a good mentor are the same respondents that indicated in question

number fourteen that they strongly disagree that they could give wise counseling to others.

Figure 16. Respondents experienced in advising teenagers

Value	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	7.84%
Disagree	4	15.44%
Neutral	1	3.84%
Agree	6	23.04%
Strongly Agree	11	42.24%

As shown in figure sixteen, of the twenty-six respondents, 7.84% strongly disagreed that they would be good at advising teenagers 15.44% disagreed that they would be good at advising teenagers, 3.84% are neutral in that they would be good at advising teenagers, 23.04% agreed that they would be good at advising teenagers and 42.24% strongly agreed that they would be good at advising teenagers. Question number fourteen is an indicator as well.

Figure 17. Respondents who received guidance in their teenage years

Value	Frequency	Percent
Agree	13	49.92%
Strongly Agree	13	49.92%

As shown in figure seventeen, of the twenty-six respondents, 49.92% strongly agreed that they had someone to guide them in their teenage years, 49.92% agreed that they had someone to guide them in their teenage years. Question number fifteen is very important that the respondents are given credence to their life and the person that served as their guide during their teenage years.

Figure 18. Respondents who would give assistance to a young adult

Value	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	26	100.00%

As shown in figure eighteen, of the twenty-six respondents, 100% agreed that they would give assistance to a Young Adult.

Figure 19. Respondents who would commit to six months or more of mentoring

Value	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	10	38.4%
Agree	10	38.4%
Strongly Agree	6	23.04%

As shown in figure nineteen, of the twenty-six respondents, 38.4% strongly are neutral in agreeing or disagreeing that they could commit six months or more of commitment. Thirty-eight point four percent agreed that they would commit to six months or more, while 23.04% strongly agreed that they would commit to six months. Question number seventeen is crucial because study shows that consistency and commitment is the one thing that causes a mentoring relationship to garner less than successful accomplishments. The mentoring program will require all mentors to make a two-year commitment.

Research Question and Hypothesis

There was the hypothesis in this study and that hypothesis was:

1. Can a faith-based organization be empowered to become mentors for the Aged-Out Foster care Youth?

2. Can a faith-based organization be educated to become mentors for the Aged-Out Foster Care Youth?
3. Can a faith-based organization be equipped to become mentors for the Aged-Out Foster Care Youth?
4. Can a faith-based organization be encouraged to become mentors for the Aged-Out Foster Care Youth?

Pre-Data Findings

Without having any indication of what the survey was about and without a sermon methodology, awareness was raised which caused the members of CFGMUMC to dialogue about possibilities which is fanning the flames for a new program to be implemented within the church. The pre-test questionnaire was very important data for the project because it provided information related to the age, education, race, sex and income level. Questions one through five on page one solicited information pertaining the members' demographic information: race, age, gender, sex, income and educational level. Page two, questions one through five solicited information pertaining to their Christian faith and beliefs. Questions six through eight solicited information pertaining to their understanding of the Foster Care system. Questions nine solicited information pertaining to their knowledge of raising a child or children. Questions ten through twelve information was solicited pertaining to being a mentor. Questions thirteen to seventeen solicited information regarding their willingness to commit.

The pre-test revealed and likely so, that the respondents have a strong faith in God and they believe in the word of God at a resounding 49.92% for those that strongly

agreed and 49.2% for those that simply agreed. In response to their daily exemplary walk with God, the resonated at 100%. Also, their belief in the Bible as the consummate word of God, along with their understanding of God's position with the poor, also resonates at 100%. However, when asked about the Bible and what it says about the fatherless, 11.52% says that they disagree that they were not aware; 34.56% remained neutral, which statistically means, not knowledgeable. When asked if they would make a good mentor, a total of 42.24% strongly disagreed, disagreed or was neutral in agreement that they would make a good mentor. However, the most surprising of them all is that 100% of the respondents agreed that someone guided them through their teenage years.

To test the hypothesis, the data derived from the pre-test not only provided the information for demographic purposes only, the information provided also allows for the determination be made in respect to what is needed to empower, educate and equip the participants to become mentors to Young Adult youth of the Foster Care system. Of the twenty-six respondents, 42.24% (11) indicated that they were not interested in becoming mentors; however, of the twenty-six respondents, 100% (26) believed that the Bible was the inerrant Word of God. Interestingly enough, of the 100% (26) that believed the Bible to be true, 46.08% (12) was not aware of what the Bible says about the widow and fatherless. For this reason, it was determined that twelve of the twenty-six respondents would comprise the focus group for the study to determine if they could be motivated to become mentors for the aged out foster care youth. The twelve congregants of the Charles F. Golden Memorial United Methodist Church were chosen based on the following: age, education and spiritual maturity. An invitation was extended,

confidentiality agreements were signed and dates were determined for the focus meetings.

The biblical teachings were designed to educate the group on the God's concern for the poor and needy and the declaration on what God would do to those that did not care for the fatherless. In like manner, biblical emphasis on Jesus as a mentor and how we are to teach others just as Christ did. The four sessions were structured to only last for thirty to forty-five minutes each with a five to ten minutes questions and answers. During each session, there was a recorder present, biblical teachings presented and questions encouraged. Each session was extended to the 48% of the respondents that believe that they could be mentors as well as those within the congregation that wanted to grasp the biblical foundation for caring for the fatherless---foster care.

The first session entitled, "Defending the Defenseless." The goal was to give the participants biblical sound doctrine for orphan care. Information was presented on Jesus being the first to start a Social Justice movement because he advocated taking care of the fatherless. The session was filled with participants as well as other members who were interested. Exodus 22:22-24 was explored and questions were explored:

1. Where are you in the context of the scripture?
2. What were thoughts hearing that God was adamant about the fatherless?
3. Before now, where you aware of God's position?

The questions ignited some interesting dialogue amongst the group. One of the participants was sitting very quietly and was asked if everything was all right. The participant stated, "I pride myself on attempting to live my life as an example of Jesus Christ and after being in church all my life; I was never taught God's mandate and

perspective on orphans. It really pains me to know that we [the church] have ignored this."

It is important to note that 100% of the twenty-six respondents during the questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that they exemplified God daily in their everyday life. It was very apparent that 80% of the participants were uncomfortable with this newfound biblical mandate. Next meeting confirmed (a week later). In respecting time and to keep session down to no more than one hour, the session was closed with a prayer.

The second session was entitled, "In the Beginning," a historical look at the origin of foster care and the role that the church had within it. The goal was to historically trace where the church initiate the orphan care and to view where we have allowed for it to go in the twenty-first century. As participants filed into the session it became apparent that many hearts were troubled. It was determined and appeared to be the consensus that God's word is true and there must be something done. The focus group addressed the need to discontinue the sessions as planned because there was no more convincing/motivation needed. It was determined by the participants that the remaining next two sessions would focus on structuring a mentoring program. Mindful of the fact that the survey suggested that 30.72% of the respondents did not know what mentoring entailed and they were asked to define the term, mentoring. Many defined mentoring as being a role model, which includes teaching basic life skills, coaching them through life decisions, and giving them a model of leadership. It was also important to respondents to note that being a mentor is a voluntary endeavor encompassing many different roles. As one of our respondents said:

> As opposed to a boss or a parent, a mentor is a volunteering thing as I see it. It's a role you do because you want to and it's a role that has to adapt to the needs of

> the mentee. So a mentor, I think just says 'I see potential, and I have experience and I would like to fill the gap' and it's never going to be a one size fits all, but mentoring is trying to shed light on the possibilities of anybody. So that's what I see; it's a lot of things, it's leadership, vision, parenting, coaching, cheerleading. It's whatever one makes of those, and many more needed to lead the way. It's a commitment that could be forever, and it's not limited.

As stated above, this respondent feels that a mentor must take on more than one role, and must be flexible and able to adapt to the needs of the mentee.

The remaining 70% percent of the respondents had a different perspective when it came to mentoring. These participants feel that mentoring takes a specific role, and relates to a mentee more as a parent does to his or her child. They see mentoring as a parenting role that includes the following: being supportive, trustworthy, involved in every aspect of their lives, assisting them financially and emotionally. As one participant described the role of a mentor: "Being a dad, being trustful, and someone who encourages the youth to choose the best choices in their lives." One additional characteristic that came up among participants was consistency. They all agreed that being a mentor requires a consistent presence in the lives of youth. These participants understood that consistency is something that many foster youth lack; therefore they believed that consistency was an essential part of mentoring. As one participant suggested, a mentor provides a "consistent relationship that is available . . . to provide advice when it's asked for – not just providing the advice but also role modeling in your everyday life."

For respondents who consider themselves to be a mentor, many were explicit about the challenges that it presents – and how seriously they take the role. The following participant spoke very eloquently to that issue, giving a sense of how focused they are in meeting the challenges of effective mentoring.

> I try to [be a mentor], and I think it's a long term goal. And, like I said, it takes a certain amount of maturity. I'm willing to do it to a point, and as I get older it should be easier. I think that has been a long process where I'm more and more comfortable. Maybe because I hold myself to a very high standard [as a mentor] and making sure I'm doing it right.

It was refreshing and rewarding to note that the participants realize early that God's word mandates for the church to take responsibility for the care of the foster care youth. However, although they grasped the biblical mandate, there is still the mentoring aspect that needs to be more defined. Therefore, an assignment was given to provide their personal meaning of mentorship. The participants were asked to dig deep and pull out what it means and what it entails. The session was summarized; the next meeting date confirmed and the prayer was given. Thus ending the session.

Session three was titled, "Mentoring – Following the Example of Christ." The goal was to demonstrate that Jesus was the ultimate model for mentoring. The question was asked, "What does Mentoring mean to you?" One participant answered by saying:

> I never saw myself as a mentor; however, I do consider myself a Disciple of Christ. To hear and read the passage in Exodus 22:22-24, literally stopped me in my tracks. I vowed and pledged to God that from that day forward, I would make it a point to give an orphan/foster care youth a hand.

Almost instantly after listening to the participant express themselves as to what mentoring meant to them, the other eleven participants and others present during this session chimed in and with a resonating sound that was almost identifiable.

Once again, the participants demonstrated that they are totally ready to become mentors by accepting the call of God to take care of the fatherless and to follow the principles of Christ. Notably, pointers were given from the planned lesson for today--- "Mentoring – Following the Examples of Christ."

1. The word "mentor" is not used in Scripture

2. Instead, the word teacher and discipler
3. Mentoring is throught the Bible
    a. Moses and Joshua
    b. Elijah and Elisha
    c. Barnanbas and Paul
    d. And the list goes on
4. Jesus was the ideal mentor
    a. The casting and communicating of life vision
    b. Teaching
        i. Verbal instruction
        ii. Experiential learning
    c. Intimate relationships
    d. Enduring life-long relationship

This was the point were the participants realized that by following the examples of Christ, the mentoring process is easy. It is the reliquishing of self to give to another that is in need of someone to guide then and steer them in the right direction. One participant said it best, “As Disciples of Christ, we are all mentors.” After this pronouncement, the participants realized and started to identify aspects within their day-to-day living that they are in fact mentoring others withouth giving it the title of mentorship. The group was reminded that the next meeting will be the last. There was a sigh. Another participant suggested that they bring light snacks to culminate this historical moment. There was excitement that they could be the cornerstone for this type of ministry at the Golden Memorial UMC. Researcher summarized the session. A prayer was given.

Session four, the last and final session entitled, “Biblical Teaching as a Key to Motivating Mentors.” All twelve plus the fifteen that at some point over the four week course attended two or more session were gathered together for the last watch of this focus group. The historical view of the Aged Out Foster Care and how the system has begun to attempt to be a better “parent.” The greatest concerns for the Aged-Out Foster care youth and the areas in which the aged-out foster youth lack in comparison to their counter parts. More detained information about Second Chapter, the non-profit in which CFGUMC has partnered and the place that provide services to the Aged Out Foster. The focus group was asked to list all their initial feelings:

1. The email was very evasive.
2. Did not want to add another “activity” to put on their schedule.
3. What is this?

After garnering an entertaining and transparent conversation, the participants were asked to list what was the motivating factor to change their mind of becoming a mentor?

1. The Biblical teachings.
2. To know that God mandated caring for Orphans.
3. The reminder that Jesus was the ultimate Mentor.
4. Knowing the statistics of the Aged Out Foster Care.
5. Remembrance of those that helped to give guidance to them (individually).

What would be a reason for this program to not go forth within the church (any)?

1. If the Pastor had never demonstrated care for the community.
2. No Biblical knowledge.
3. No teaching on the orphans.

4. An absence of a heart to serve.
5. No clarity/understanding of the Aged Out Foster Care

What would be the reasons for this program to go forth within Golden United Methodist Church?

1. Interest
2. Teaching
3. Consistency
4. Growth
5. A Heart for God's people
6. An Understanding of the Aged Out Foster Care

After a hearty dialogue went forth regarding the potential of this type of program in every church and how if every church decided to do this then it would or could alleviate the problem that is plaquing the eighteen year olds who are aging out of the foster care system and thus hearkening to the mandated care in Exodus 22:21-24. The participants were adamant that if presented to others the way in which it was presented to them, will compel people to want to go forth and care for the fatherless.

Notably, after witnessing the enthusiasm of participants, the post test was administered. The post-test captured the questions the researcher needed to prove or not prove the hypothesis that over the last four weeks, the participants were encouraged, empowered, equipped and educated to become mentors to the aged out foster care youth. With one being strongly disagreed and five being strongly agreed. Nine questions were presented.

Conclusion

This study was designed to answer four research questions concerning the role the a Faith-Based Organization can play for the Aged Out Foster Care Youth. The summary of learning (recommendations of the research findings) and conclusion are presented in order to summarize the significant finding of interest.

Summary

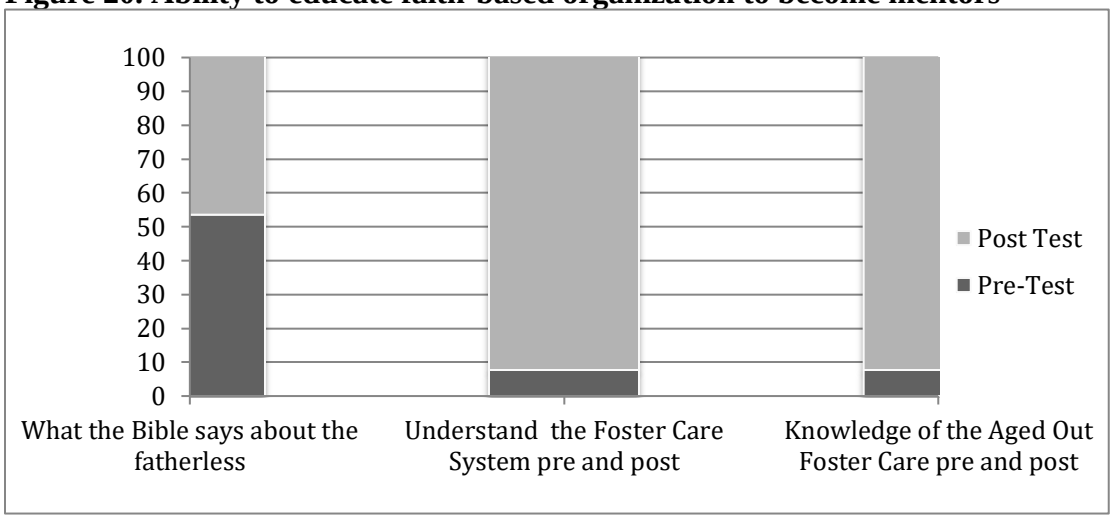
Research Question 1: Can a faith-based organization be educated to become mentors for the Aged-Out Foster care Youth?

1) Pre-test (question number five) and post-test (question number one) - I am aware of what the Bible says about the fatherless. 100% of the twenty-six participants answered strongly agree that they now know what the Bible says about the fatherless. The pre-test revealed that 11.52% (see figure 6) disagreed and 34.56% were neutral in their awareness of the Bible reference to the fatherless. However, after the biblical teachings, an increase of 53% (see figure 20) strongly agreed that they are aware of what the Bible says about the fatherless.
2) Pre-test question number six and post test question number two – I understand how the Foster Care System works. One hundred percent of the twenty-six participants understand how the Foster Care sytem works. The pre-test revealed that 92.16% (see figure 7) strongly agreed that they they did not understand how the foster care system worked with 7.68% indicating that they did understand. It was after teaching of the Foster Care system, an increase of

92% (see figure 20), indicated that they understood how the Foster Care sytem works.

3) Pre-test question number seven and post test question number three, 92.17% indicated that they were not knowledgeable of Aged Out Foster Care with 7.68% (see figure 8) indicating that they were knowledgeable of Aged Out Foster Care. After teaching on the Aged-Out Foster Care, 100% of the twenty-six participants, indicated that they were knowledgeable of the Aged Out Foster Care Youth citing an increase of 92% (see figure 20).

Figure 20. Ability to educate faith-based organization to become mentors



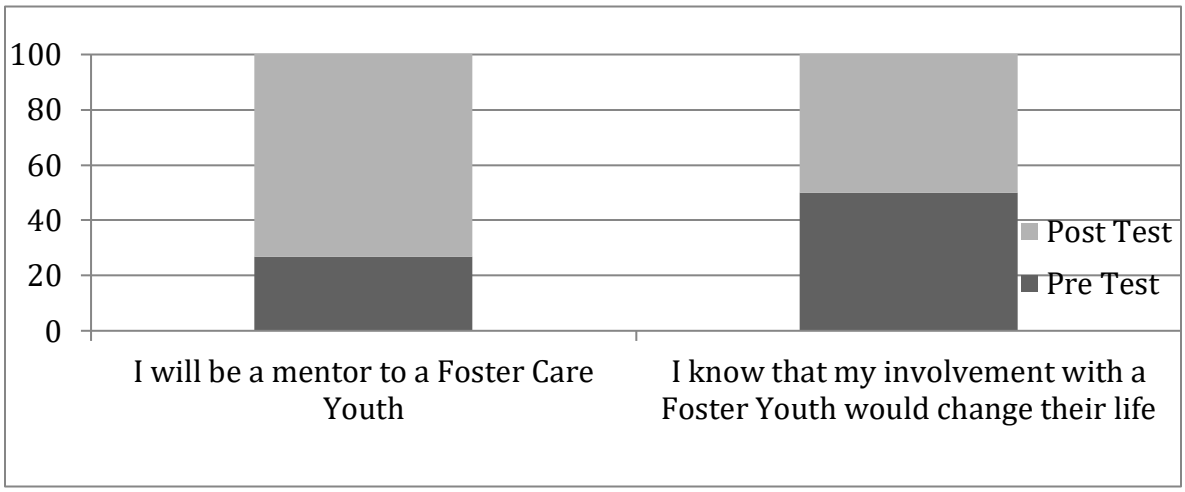
Research Question #2: Can a faith-based organization be encouraged to become mentors for the Aged-Out Foster Care Youth?

1) Pre-test question number eight and post test question number four – I would consider being a mentor to the Foster Care youth. The post test question read –I will be a mentor to a Foster Care Youth. The pre-test revealed that 30.72% strongly disagreed that they would be a mentor; 7.68% disagreed that they

would be a mentor; 15.36% remained neutral and 19.2% agreed (see figure 9). The post test showed that after encouraging the participants and expressing to them that the Youth needed an adult "buddy" to encourage them and be their cheerleader while maneauvering through the obstacles of life, 100% of the twenty-six participants wants to be a mentor to the Aged-Out Foster Care Youth with increase of 73.12% (see figure 21).

2) Pre-test question number ten and post-test question number five – I would hope that my involvement with a foster youth would change their life. The pre-test question revealed that 3.84% strongly disagreed; 15.36% disagreed; 11.52% remained neutral and 19.2% agreed (see figure 11). The post-test revealed that after encouraging the participants that their involvement (whether big or small) would make a tremendous difference within the foster youth life. 100% of the twenty-six participants, with an increase of 76.96 believe that their involvement would make a difference (see figure 21).

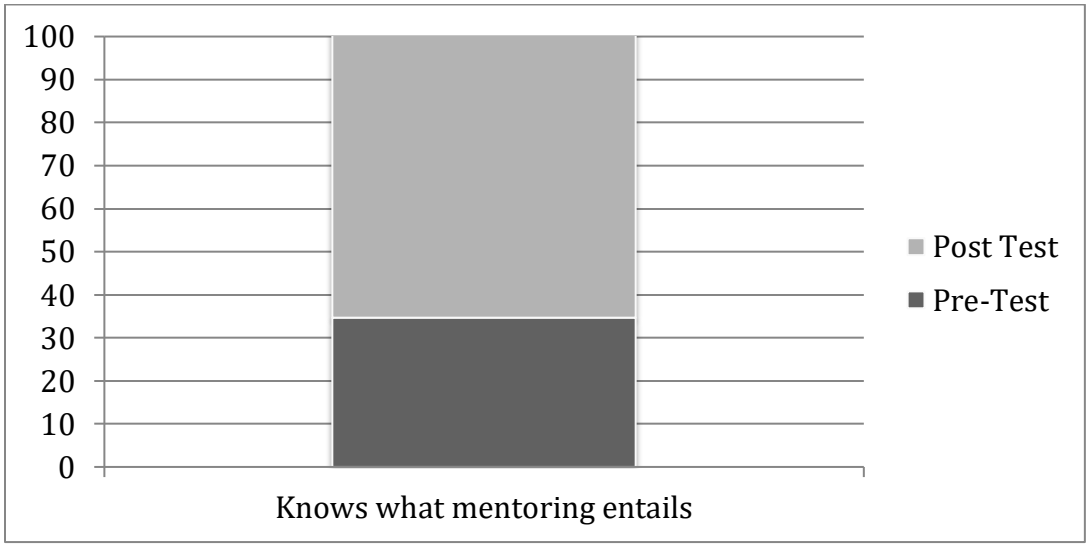
Figure 21. Ability to encourage faith-based organization to become mentors



Research Question #3: Can a faith-based organization be equipped to become mentors for the Aged-Out Foster Care Youth?

1) Pre-test question number eleven and post test question number seven – I know what mentoring entails. The pre-test question revealed that 7.68% strongly disagreed; 11.52% disagree; 11.52% remained neutral and 3.84% agreed (figure 13). The post-test revealed that after giving them basic information on mentoring Aged Out Foster Care youth and giving suggesting on how to go about doing it. The researcher literally touched on a few pointers because this was not actually a training session for the mentors. Nevertheless, astoundingly, 100% of the twenty-six participants, with an increase of 34.72% believe that with the tutelage of the training sessions that they would gain more knowledge and therefore, understand what it takes to be a good mentor (see figure 22).

Figure 22. Ability to equip faith-based organization to become mentors

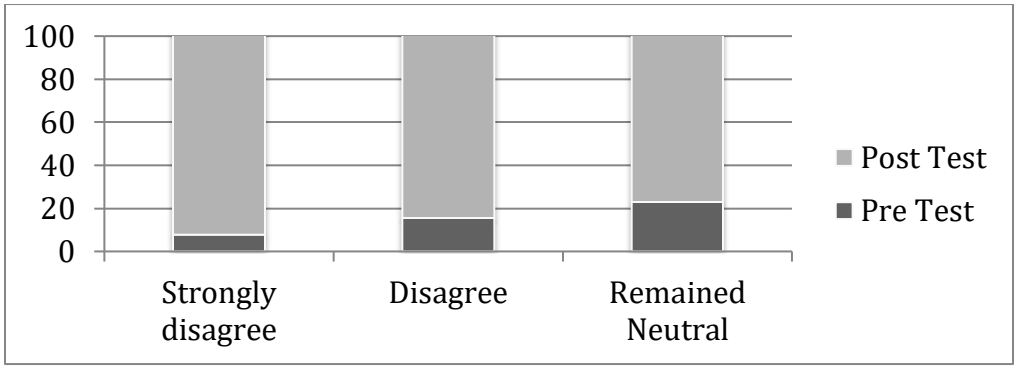


Research Question #4: Can a faith-based organization be empowered to become mentors for the Aged-Out Foster Care Youth?

1) Pre-test question number fourteen and post-test question number eight – I like giving advise to teenagers. The pre-test question revealed that 7.84% strongly disagreed; 15.44% disagreed; 3.84% remained neutral and 23.04% agreed (see figure 15). The post-test revealed that after reassuring the participants that the life lived life will be enough to navigate and assist the youth with advise that will assure them stability and let them know that there is someone who care. Comparatively, and again, 100% of the twenty-six participants, with an increase of 57.76% believe they could advise a youth on lessons lived and learned (see figure 23).
2) Pre-test question number seventeen and post-test question number ning – I can commit to advising someone for two or more years. The pre-test question revealed that 38.4% were neutral and 38.4% agreed (see figure 19). Moreover,

the pre test only asked for a commitment for six months. The post-test asked for a two year commitment. With only 23.2% strongly agreeing to commit themselves to six months in the pre test, the number decreased in the post-test by 5.9%. After changing from six months to two years the 23.2% decreased to 17.3% by margin of 5.9%. However, the 38.4% that were neutral and the 38.4% that agreed, increased to 13.6% to strongly agreed.

Figure 23. Ability to empower faith-based organization to become mentors



Recommendations

Research concerning mentoring aged out foster care by a non-profit organization has not been fully immersed. We do know that there is a great need for this research to become paramount because our aged out Foster Care Youth of America is in need of a life guide that will prevent them for taking the wrong route of life. As a result of this study, the researched recommends the following:

1) Research should continue in order to establish a foundation for Faith –Based Organizations to fulfill the decree from God to take care of the widows and fatherless.

2) I recommend that the mentoring start at age thirteen instead of eighteen because there is a gap that the youth are vitally missing that should be at least attempting to achieve by the age of eighteen.
3) This study should have had two focus groups. One of believers and non-believers.
4) Commitment of more than twelve months is recommended.

The purpose of this was to examine a theological approach to motivating a faith based organization for the Emancipated Youth aged out foster care youth. Throughout God's law—which is his nature-revealing instruction for holy living—we see the care, provision, and redemption, of the poor and marginalized highlighted. We see God command His people to treat the poor and marginalized fairly, to make provisions for them, and allow them to be released every year of Jubilee. He also commands His people to give generously, not begrudgingly. In a very poetic justice kind of way, we see the practices that are condemned: oppressing the poor, mocking the poor, gloating over disaster, shutting our ears to the cry of the poor, exploiting the poor, crushing the needy in court, closing our eyes to the poor, and not being concerned about justice for the poor.

Ignoring the poor shows just as much contempt for God as actively oppressing the poor. However, notice the practices that are blessed: being kind to the needy, lending to the poor, being generous, sharing food with the poor, giving to the poor, caring about justice for the poor, speaking up for those who cannot speak for themselves, judging fairly, and defending the rights of the poor and needy. Being kind to the needy is even equated with honoring God, while oppressing the poor shows hatred for our Maker.

We see God speak through the prophets to rebuke Israel for their disobedience, including oppression of the poor and marginalized and a lack of concern for justice. In Isaiah 58:6-7, the Lord deplores those who claim to be religious yet do not "loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, set the oppressed free and break every yoke." The kind of religion that God honors is "to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter" and "when you see the naked, to clothe him." The early church modeled social concern. In Acts 6, seven godly men were designated by the leaders of the church to focus their attention on caring for the widows. (In this passage, widows represent marginalized people; people that have a difficult time or are unable to care for themselves). In Exodus 22, specific instructions were given to the body of Christ on how to care for orphans.

As a result of this study, there were some interesting target areas that gleaned from this project (1) It was discovered that there was not much in terms of research that had been performed in regards to motivating a Faith Based Organization's members. (2) In addition, there was not much research that had been presented that spoke to the specific of motivating FBO members to become mentors for the aged out foster care youth. (3) Although it should, it was breathtaking to experience the transformative power of the word of God. To witness those that emphatically stated that they did not want to be a mentor and actually had very cumbersome attitudes on week one of the four-week session was uplifting. (4) The transformation cement the understanding that if taught, the body or members get an understanding and a desire to do the will of God which illuminates Hebrews 4:6, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge…"(5) Lastly, there is a greater need to equip, empower, encourage and educate members of Faith

Based Organizations to see a need and spark a desire to want to be mentors to the aged out foster care youth.

Due to the triumph of this project, it has given my pastor, Dr. Greg Williams encouragement to continue on the path of building the Family Life Center that will empower the community with hope and love because the statistics make known that knowledge and the Bible can shift a group of believers into realizing the importance of a subject. It is imperative to partner with another non-profit with common interest to share all the woes of offering service and managing volunteers.

Finally, no young adult should be allowed to leave foster care without a place to live and a way to support themselves. Department of Health and Human Services needs to match adolescents with supportive adults before the teen turn eighteen. In Georgia, the youth in foster care are to receive Independent Living Skills starting at the age of thirteen. It would fulfill the mandate of God to take care of the orphans if Faith Based Organizations would collectively come together to forge a relationship with an aged out foster care youth to acquire the skills of holding down a job, budgeting money while fostering a circle of care. However, as the results of this project showed if they don't know and not taught then they have no desire or need to want to do. Teens need a chance to mess up before it's essential that they get it right. If they could take a few steps towards self-sufficiency with the safety net of a trained Faith Based Organization, more would be prepared for what lies ahead after they leave the foster care system.

APPENDIX A

PRE TEST

PRE-TEST January 17, 2016

Name:

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. **What age group do you fall under?**

18-30 31-35 36-39 40-49 50-65

2. **Educational Level**

GED Highschool Graduate Some College College Graduate Masters Professional Degree

3. **Race**

AA
White
Asian
Hispanic
Other

4. **Sex**

Male
Female
Other

5. **Income Level**

15,000---19,999
21,000 ---24,999
25,000 ---29,999
30,000 ---39,999
40,000 ---49,999
50,000 ---59,999
60,000+

Answer these questions on a scale from 1-5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
1. Accepts Jesus Christ as Savior					
2. Exemplify God daily					
3. The Bible is the guide for Christian					
4. God is concerned with everyone, even the poor					
5. I am aware of what the Bible says about the widows and the fatherless					
6. I understand how the Foster Care system works.					
7. I am knowledgeable of Aged Out Foster care Youth					
8. I would consider being a mentor to Foster care Youth					
9. I have raised a child from age 18-21.					
10. I would hope that my involvement with a foster youth would change their life.					
11. I would make a good mentor.					
12. I know what mentoring entails.					
13. I give wisely advice to others often.					
14. I like giving advise to teenagers.					
15. I had someone to guide me.					
16. I would give assistance to a young adult that needed it.					
17. I can commit to advising someone for more than six months.					

APPENDIX B

POST TEXT

POST TEST
Name:
February 25, 2016

Answer these questions on a scale from 1-5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
1. I am aware of what the Bible says about the widows and the fatherless					
2. I understand how the Foster Care system works.					
3. I am knowledgeable of Aged Out Foster care Youth					
4. I will be a mentor to Foster care Youth.					
5. I know that my involvement with a foster youth would change their life.					
6. I know what mentoring entails.					
7. I like giving advice to teenagers					
8. I will commit to being a mentor for more than ywo or more years.					

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